



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

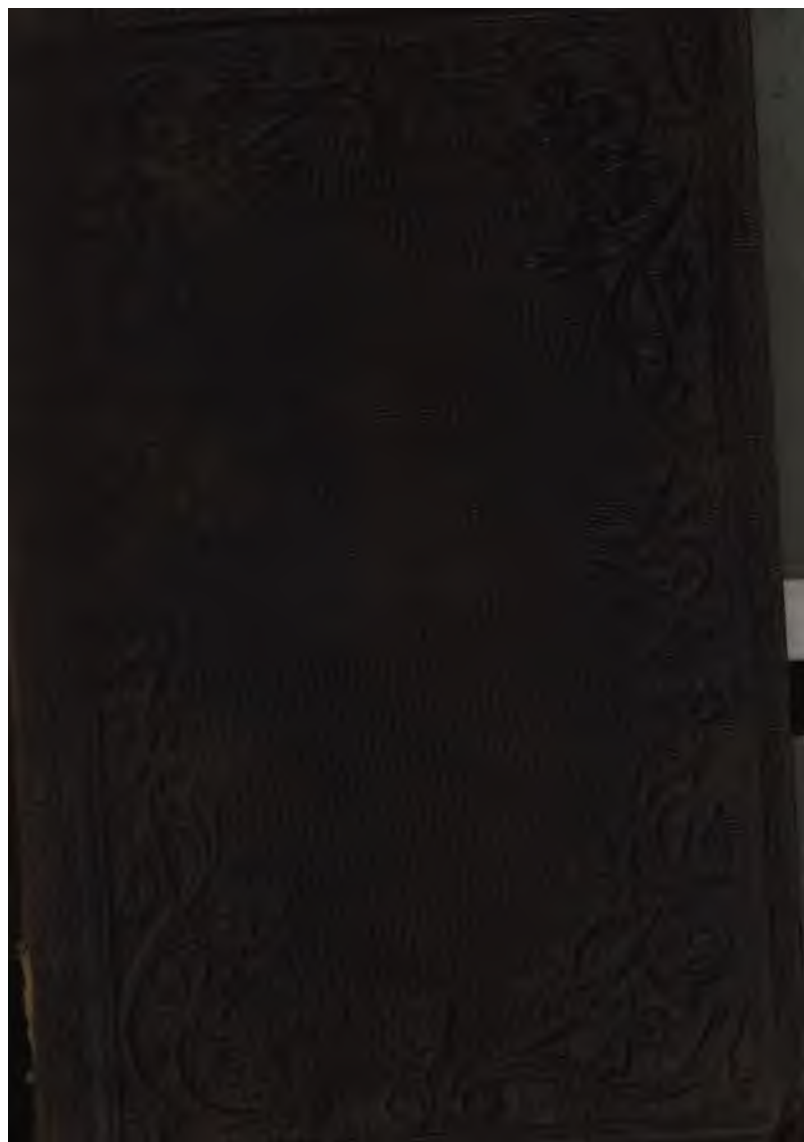
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





•

•

•

•

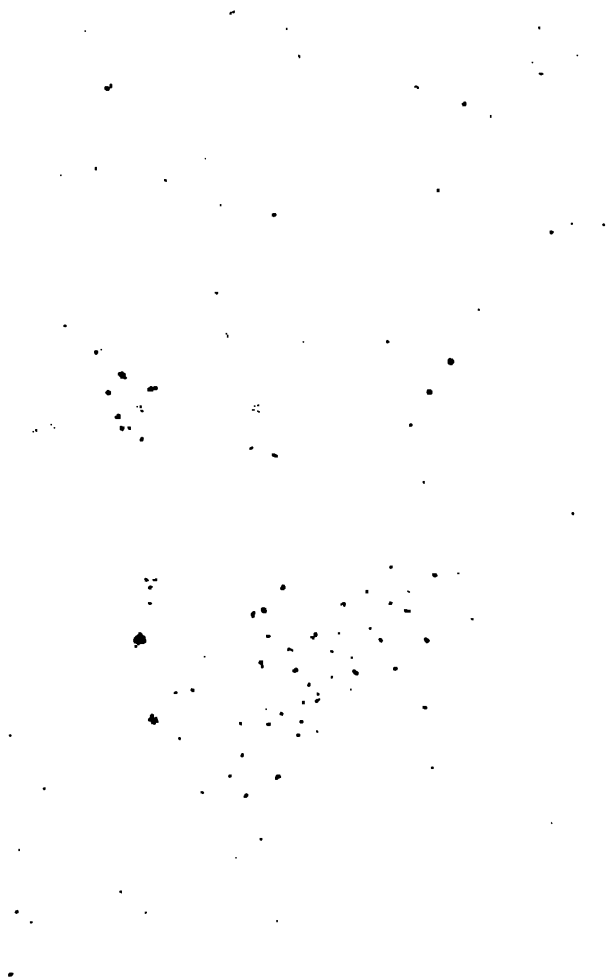
•



BIBLE HISTORY:

FOR THE USE OF

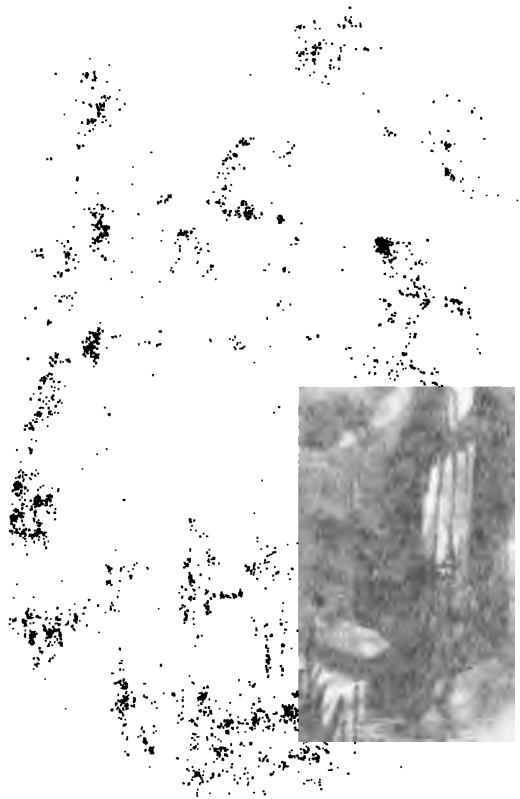
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS.





First.

And the princess was full of pity for it, and she said,
"It must be one of the Hebrew children."—P. 112



BIBLE HISTORY:

FOR THE USE OF

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS.

With Descriptive Explanations

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HELEN'S FAULT,"

ETC. ETC.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

LONDON:

G. ROUTLEDGE & CO., FARRINGDON STREET.

NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.

1856.

101. d. 80.

BIBLE HISTORY

FOR CHILDREN.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED GENESIS.

'GENESIS' is the name of the first book of Moses in the Greek translation. It means "generation" or "production," and is used to signify the creation which is described in this book.—The Hebrew name for this book means, "in the beginning." The book of Genesis relates the events which happened during the long period of 2369 years. It tells of the Creation of the world ; of the ~~destruction~~ destruction of all living beings except those saved in the Ark ; of the manner in which Noah's descendants were scattered over the face of the earth ; of Abraham being called by God to leave his family and settle in Canaan ; and of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

It relates the histories of Isaac and Jacob ; of Joseph and his brethren, and how it came to

pass that they left Canaan and settled in the land of Egypt, with many other things concerning the Israelites.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

THERE was a time, my dear children, many thousand years ago, when there was no light, no sky, no sun, no moon nor stars, no world, no plants, or living animals, all was darkness and emptiness.

But there was God. There never was a time without God, nor can there be a time without him. And with God there was his Son our Lord, for "He was in the beginning with God; and without him was not anything made that was made;" (John i. 2, 3.)

God, and his Son, our Lord, and the Holy Spirit of God created the Heaven and the Earth in the beginning; but at first—we do not know for how long—the earth was without form, and it was empty, and mixed with the water (v. 9; 2 Pet. iii. 9); and all was darkness.

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

“And God said, Let there be light.”

Then the cheerful light shone forth, and God saw the light that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness ; and God called the light Day ; and the darkness he called Night.”

“And the evening and the morning were the first day.”

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters, and it was so.”

So the vast sky was made that stretches far, far away above our heads, farther much than you can see, and He called the sky Heaven—Lifted up—for it was lifted up and separated from what was below.

This did God do upon the second day.

And upon the third day God divided the emptiness that was below, and separated the land from the water. The dry, firm land, that we walk upon, he called Earth ; the gathering together of the moist and yielding waters he called Seas.

And God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass and fruit-trees and herba.

And so it was.

The bright green grass sprang up, and covered

the earth with its soft carpet. The tall oak tree and the beech tree, the dark fir tree, and all trees that are pleasant for beauty and for shade, proper for wood to burn, or to form useful articles for man ; the apple tree and the cherry tree, the peach and the pear tree, currant trees and gooseberry trees, all trees that bear pleasant fruit to eat. The rose tree and the lilac, and the golden-flowered laburnum, bright geraniums and fuchsias, all flowers that are beautiful to look at and delicious to smell ; and the small flowers that grow no higher than the grass, daisies and buttercups and primroses. And all corn and vegetables good for food. All these plants brought forth seed according to their kind, and God saw that it was good.

“ And the evening and the morning were the third day.”

And God said, “ Let there be lights in the heavens to divide the day from the night,” and to mark the summer and winter, and the days and years, and to give light to the earth.

And God made two great lights. The great bright warm sun, which you cannot look at for its brightness, and without whose warmth no fruit would ripen, and no buds open, and all would be cold and dull. And also the calm

white moon. The sun to shine in the day, and the moon to shine in the night. God made the stars also. The numbers of bright stars which, when you look out at night, you see sparkling in the sky above your head, and of which there are so many that you cannot count them—God set all these, the sun and the moon and the stars in the Heaven, and so firmly that they cannot be moved away from the path in which he has ordered them to go.

And God saw that these were good.

“And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”

And now the sky was made, and filled with bright and beautiful lights, and the earth was formed and covered with trees, and fruits, and flowers. The sea was made also ; but as yet there were no living beings to live in them, and to make use of their abundance.

“Then God said, Let the waters bring forth the moving creatures that have life, and fowls that may fly above the earth.”

So the fishes were made, and all sorts of birds. Great ostriches and eagles, and all the little singing birds, gay parrots and tiny humming birds ; and all birds that are good for food, hens and partridges, and pheasants ; and all birds that

swim on the water, like the swan, and the goose, and the duck. Numbers and numbers of different sorts of birds.

“And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.”

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creatures after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast after its kind, and it was so.”

For all the animals were made, cows and sheep, and horses and pigs, which are all so useful to us for food and for clothing. The nimble deer, the cunning monkey, the faithful dog; the huge elephant and the tiny mouse; fierce lions and tigers, God made them all; with numbers and numbers more. So now the earth was all ready; filled with beautiful and useful and good things; and warmed and lighted by the sun and the moon and the stars; everything was ready for man.

And God made man in his own image, different from the plants which can neither move, nor see, nor feel; different from the animals, who though they can move, and see, and feel, yet have no knowledge in their minds, as we have, to tell them what is right and what is wrong; just as our bodies feel what is pleasant and what is unpleasant. Our souls will never die. But

our bodies will die, and become dust, like the bodies of the animals when they die. As a cut or a bruise hurts our bodies, so doing wrong hurts our souls. We ought to be much more careful of hurting our souls by doing wrong than we are of hurting our bodies by cuts or bruises. For if we do wrong and hurt our souls, God cannot love us, and if God does not love us, we cannot go to heaven. Think then what a dreadful thing it is to displease the great and good God, by doing wrong and hurting our souls. Love Him, and keep His commandments.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SECOND CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

"THUS the heavens and the earth were finished" in six days. "And on the seventh day God ended the work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day."

This seventh day is the Sabbath, which means "Holy rest."

And as God rested upon the seventh day, he commanded us also to rest upon that day, to-

remind us that God did create or make the whole world, and all the heavens, and all that they both contain, in six days.

The Lord planted a beautiful garden in Eden. A river flowed through this garden to water it, and four other rivers ran from this one river and surrounded the garden of Eden. In the garden God planted all sorts of trees and flowers; trees that bore good fruits, and flowers that were beautiful to look at. No ugly coarse weeds grew in it; there were neither thorns nor thistles. There fell no cold snows nor frosts over this lovely garden; there blew no bitter, cold winds; it was always like summer there.

In the middle of the garden God planted the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

“And the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to keep it.”

And the Lord God told the man that he might gather the fruits to eat, from off all the trees that grew in the garden, except from the tree of knowledge of good and evil which grew in the middle of the garden.

God forbade the man to gather and eat the fruit from that tree, and God told the man that if he disobeyed this commandment that he should surely die.

And then God brought all living creatures before the man, and the man gave them all their different names.

Now the man Adam was alone in the garden of Eden. There was not one amongst all the animals that was fit for a companion for him.

“And the Lord God said it is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help fit for him.”

“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept.”

And he took one of Adam's ribs from his body and closed up the flesh again, “and of the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.” And Adam said that she should be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.

Afterwards he called her Eve, because she was the mother of all living people

CHAPTER III.

ON THE THIRD CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

ADAM and Eve lived very happily together in the beautiful garden of Eden, whilst they obeyed God, and kept themselves from gathering

any fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden. But one day Eve was by herself; Adam was in another part of the garden. She came near to the tree in the middle of the garden. This was not wise of her. It is best to keep quite away from anything we are bidden not to touch, neither to go near or look at it, lest we should be tempted to disobey.

Whilst Eve was near the tree there came to her a wicked cunning serpent.

And the serpent said to her, "Did God say that you were not to gather fruit from every one of the trees in this garden?"

And Eve said unto the serpent,

"Yes—we may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden—we may eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden. Only of the fruit of this tree that grows in the middle of the garden we must not eat. God has said we are not to eat of it, neither are we even to touch it, for fear we should die."

Then said the wicked serpent,

"You shall not die. If you eat the fruit of this tree it will make you very wise and clever."

Then the foolish woman believed what the wicked serpent told her more than what the wise and good God had told her. She must

have forgotten how very, very kind God had been to her and to Adam. She looked at the fruit that grew upon the tree, and she thought it seemed very nice ; and she became ungrateful and disobedient, and stretched out her hand, and reached up to the branches of the tree and plucked off some of the fruit and eat it. Then she carried some to Adam, who, instead of being angry with Eve for her wicked action, took the fruit from her hands and eat it also.

In the cool of the day, they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden. Then Adam and Eve went and hid themselves amongst the trees.

And the Lord God called to Adam, and said, "Where art thou?"

Adam said: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

The Lord God said: "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee not to eat?"

Then the man began to make excuses, and to blame his wife, saying, "The woman whom thou gavest me, gave me the fruit, and I did eat."

The woman then made excuses, saying it was the serpent who had persuaded her.

Then the Lord God was very much displeased. He said that the wicked serpent should be punished, creeping in the dust and hated by man for ever; that the woman should be punished with sorrow and pain, and that the ground should bring forth thorns and briers; and Adam was to labour hard for his daily bread, till the day when he must die, and go back to the ground from which he was taken; for he was made of dust, and to dust should he return.

But although they had been so disobedient and ungrateful, the Lord God made coats of skins to clothe them; and then he sent Adam and his wife out of the garden of Eden. And he placed at the east of the garden angels and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE FOURTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

THUS for their disobedience were Adam and Eve driven out of the beautiful garden into the wide world; Adam to work very hard for his daily

bread, and Eve to suffer pain and sorrow till the day came for them to die.

In the course of time they had two sons. The eldest was called Cain, and the youngest Abel. When they grew up to be men, Abel's business was to keep sheep, and Cain's business was to dig the ground, and to sow seeds and plants for food. Abel was good; but Cain was wicked, and envious, and passionate.

And it happened one day that the two brothers brought offerings to the Lord. Cain brought fruit of the ground, and Abel a lamb from his flock. And the Lord was pleased with Abel, and accepted his offering, but Cain's He would not accept. And Cain was very angry, and his face looked full of rage.

The Lord asked him why he was so angry? and the Lord told him that if he did well, his offering also would be accepted; and that if it was not accepted, it was through his own fault.

After this Cain and Abel were together in a field, and the wicked Cain turned upon Abel and killed him.

And the Lord God said unto Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?"

And Cain said, "I know not: am I my brothers' keeper?"

And the Lord said, "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

Then the Lord told Cain that the earth upon which he had shed his brother's blood should no longer give him any food, however hard he might labour; and that he should be driven from his father and mother, and wander about upon the earth without a home.

Cain said that "his punishment was greater than he could bear;" and that he was afraid that if he was driven from his home people might kill him, as he had killed his own innocent brother.

But God promised him that his life should be safe; and Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and left Adam and Eve, and wandered a fugitive with his wife, to the east of the garden of Eden.

And God gave Eve another son in place of Abel whom Cain slew, and she called his name Seth.

Men lived to a very great age in those days. We now think a man very old indeed who lives to the age of ninety, but Adam lived to be nine hundred and thirty. Enos was the name of Adam's grandson; and the great great great grandson of Enos lived to be nine hundred and sixty-nine

years. His name was Methuselah, and he lived to a greater age than any other man. Adam was still alive when Noah was born, who was Methuselah's grandson; and Methuselah lived till the flood, about which I shall tell you in the next chapter.

These men who lived before the flood are often called Ante-diluvians. "Ante" means before, and "diluvian," relating to the deluge, or flood.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

It was now more than 2500 years since the creation of the world, and many people were living upon the earth; old men and young men, and women and children. But they had all grown very, very wicked; every thought of their hearts was bad, and everything they did and intended to do was exceedingly bad. And the Lord God saw their wickedness, and He was grieved at the heart; and the Lord God was sorry that He had made man upon the earth.

But there was one good man in the world—

one man who feared God, and obeyed Him: and though all his neighbours, and every one he saw and heard of, did whatever they liked, and obeyed God no longer, yet this man, whose name was Noah, would not follow their wicked example. No doubt they all mocked at him, and laughed at him, but Noah did not care for this, but cared only for God; and he found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

And the Lord had still patience (1 Pet. iii. 20) with men for a hundred and twenty years,—for He is full of pity and long suffering; and if at the end of that time the wicked people did not become better, the Lord said He would destroy man whom He had made from off the face of the earth, and every living creature also. God told Noah to begin to build an ark of cypress wood, —a very large house that would float. It was to be one hundred and eighty-one yards long and thirty-one yards wide, and eighteen yards high; it was to have three stories, a window, and a door; and to be covered with pitch to keep out the rain.

God told Noah that He was going to bring a flood upon the earth to destroy every living creature, but that Noah and his family He would preserve alive.

Whilst Noah was building the ark, he preached to the people to turn them from their wicked ways (2 Pet. ii. 5); but they gave no heed to him, and very likely they thought him very foolish to go on building the ark for so many years so patiently. They eat and drank, and feasted and married, and were as wicked as ever; and years passed on, and no flood came, and they thought no flood ever would come; and they grew worse and worse.

But Noah went on building till the ark was finished. And God told Noah to take some of every kind of beast; two of some kinds, and seven of others; and seven of every sort of bird, and some of all creeping things, and to enter with them into the ark; and his three sons, whose names were Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and his own wife, and his sons' wives, all were to go into the place of safety,—the ark, which Noah had been building these many years,—for in seven days the rain would begin.

Noah did exactly as he was commanded to do; and all the creatures that were to be saved came of their own accord to Noah; and they all went inside the ark, and the Lord shut them in. Noah was nearly six hundred years old when he went into the ark.

Very likely the wicked people thought Noah more foolish than ever, when they saw him shut up in the ark, and the sky looking so bright, and blue, and no sign of rain; for they did not believe in the least what he had told them.

But in a week, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and the rain began to fall!

Sometimes when it has been raining very hard indeed, I dare say you may have often gone to the window and looked out, and seen it falling almost like a sheet of water, so that you could hardly see the trees in the garden near you; and perhaps you have heard people say, "What a deluge of rain!" Well, this was nothing in comparison to the rain that fell at the flood.

Now the wicked people began to be frightened, and to think, perhaps, Noah had been right, after all. Perhaps they began to be sorry as well as frightened, and to wish they had minded Noah's preaching, when they saw the rain come down in this terrible way; for the rain fell, hour after hour, day and night, day and night! It did not seem as if it was ever going to stop!

Soon all the ground lying low was covered; but it was of no use to run to the hills, or to climb to the tops of the highest trees; the rain con-

tinued to pour down, and these also were covered, and everybody drowned that was upon them. It was of no use clambering up to the highest peaks of the mountains; the torrents of rain still continued, and the mountains also were covered with deep water, and all the people who had fled there for safety were swept away. Soon the whole earth was covered with water as with a garment. (Ps. civ. 6.)

At the end of forty days and forty nights the rain ceased. Every living creature that was upon the dry land was drowned. Men, women, and children, beasts, and birds, and creeping things, —not one was left alive.

But the ark was borne upon the top of the waters; and Noah and all that were shut in with him were perfectly safe.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE EIGHTH, NINTH, AND ELEVENTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

AFTER the end of one hundred and fifty days, the water that covered the earth began to be less deep, and on the 17th day of the seventh

month, the ark rested upon the top of the mountain of Ararat in Armenia (Isaiah xxxvii. 38 ; Jer. li. 27), and the waters got less and less, and on the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains were to be seen. Forty days after this Noah opened the window and sent out a raven, who flew to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Noah also sent out a dove, but the dove, whose nature was to live in the valleys (Ezek. vii. 16) amongst the trees, could find no rest for her foot on the bare mountain tops, and she flew back to the ark, and Noah put out his hand and took her in.

In another week he sent out the dove a second time ; and in the evening she came back, and, lo ! there was the leaf of an olive tree in her bill ; so Noah knew that the waters had now gone down so much that the trees were to be seen again.

In another week he sent out the dove for the third time ; but she came back no more ; then Noah took the covering off the ark, and looked out, and he saw that the face of the ground was dry.

This was about the beginning of our month of December. A year all but ten days had passed, since Noah entered into the ark.

And God told Noah to leave the ark with his wife and his children, and all the living creatures that were in the ark, that they might multiply abundantly upon the earth.

And Noah and all the living creatures that had been shut up in the ark left it.

How glad they must have been to walk out once more, to feel the ground under their feet and see the sweet country again, after they had been shut up for nearly a year, with nothing to be seen but water everywhere!

And Noah built an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings upon the altar.

An altar was a small table made of stones placed one upon another, upon which the flesh of some kinds of animals or some of the fruits of the earth were burnt as sacrifices, or offerings to the Lord. You remember that Abel offered a lamb as a burnt offering, and Cain some fruits, which is the first mention that is made of sacrifices.

The Lord accepted Noah's offering as He had done Abel's, and the Lord said in His heart that He would not again smite every living thing as He had done, and that as long as the earth remained, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night, should not cease.

And God blessed Noah and his sons. He gave them permission to take of all living creatures that were fit, and to use them for food, and He promised Noah that there should not be any more a flood to destroy the earth ; and as a sign of this promise, God said that He would set the rainbow in the clouds, and that He would look upon it, so that He might remember the everlasting covenant between God and every creature of all flesh that is upon the face of the earth. When there is rain and sunshine at the same time, if you look, you will see somewhere the beautiful many-coloured rainbow stretching like a vast arch over the sky. Then think of the flood, and what an odious thing is wickedness in the eyes of God, and how great His mercy is towards those that fear Him.

Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. He was nine hundred and fifty years old when he died.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth had sons and grandsons, and these had sons and grandsons also, and soon the land began to be full of people again ; and they all spoke the same language.

And the people travelled south-west from Armenia and came to the plain of Shinar, near the great river Euphrates, and there they began

to build a city and a very high tower of brick, (Deut. i. 28; ix. 1,) and there they meant to stay and become a mighty nation, instead of travelling onwards, and filling the earth with people.

And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of Adam were building; but He did not choose that they should become a proud, strong people, to do whatever they willed, and He confused all their speaking, so that they could no longer understand each other, for they all began to speak different languages; and they left off building the city, and the Lord scattered them abroad to different parts of the earth, those who spoke the same language going together (chap. x. 5, xx. 31). And the city and tower which they began to build was called Babel, which means "confusion." Near this spot Babylon was afterwards built.

About 400 years after the flood, there lived a man, called Terah, who was descended from Shem, and Terah had three sons whose names were Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Terah left his country, which was called Ur, and went to live at a place called Charran; and his two sons, Abram and Nahor went with him; Haran was dead, but he had left a son, called Lot, who accompanied his grandfather and uncles.

And Terah died in Charran aged 205 years. People, you see, did not live so long now as formerly.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

WHEN Abram was seventy-five years old, the Lord bade him depart from Charran, or Haran, as it is called, and leave his relations, and go unto a place which he would show him. And the Lord promised that he would bless Abram, and make his descendants a great nation ; and that in him "all the nations of the earth should be blessed." The Israelites, Abram's descendants, did become a great nation after a great many years had passed ; and the mother of our Lord was, you know, an Israelitish woman. This promise to Abram was the second prophecy, or foretelling of the coming of the Saviour ; the first, was made to Adam.

So Abram departed, as the Lord had commanded him ; he was as obedient as Noah. And he took with him his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot, and his servants, and his flocks, and his herds, and all that he had, and journeyed to the land of Canaan.

The Canaanites lived in Canaan, they were descended from Noah's son, Ham, and were idolaters and a very wicked and fierce people.

And Abram travelled onwards towards the south, passing by Bethel and Sicheim, at both which places he builded altars to the Lord. And there was a famine in the land, and Abram went to stay in Egypt, where there was plenty of food.

The king of Egypt was called Pharaoh, and he treated Abram very kindly, and gave him sheep and oxen, and asses and camels, and men servants and maid servants.

After some time Abram left Egypt and returned again to Bethel, which is still one of the most fertile pasture lands in the country,* producing the finest milk and butter. And Abram was very rich in gold and silver and in cattle, and so was his nephew Lot. And there was not grass enough in the country for all the flocks and herds, for no rain falls during the summer months in Canaan, or Palestine, as it is now called, and the pastures are burnt up by the heat, so Abram's and Lot's shepherds quarrelled.

Abram spoke very gently to Lot, and begged that there might be no quarrel between them or

* Robinson's Biblical Researches.

between their shepherds, and Abram said that it would be better for them to separate.

"If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right hand," he said; "or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of the river Jordan. It was well watered, and as beautiful as a garden, for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were not yet destroyed.

Then Lot chose the plain of Jordan, and he and Abram separated. Lot went towards Sodom, and pitched his tent there. You know what a tent is? Perhaps you may have seen one made of canvass. The wandering Arabs of Syria still live in tents, which are probably much the same as those used in the days of Abram and Lot. They are made of a strong coarse stuff, woven of hair, in broad stripes of black, relieved by a white line. This stuff is stretched over poles, which are stuck into the ground. Tents have neither windows nor doors, the people who live in them, go in and out through the division of the covering, and if they want more air and light they lift up the sides. A tent is easily taken up and folded, and packed upon a camel's back, when its master wants to move to another place, and it is soon put up

again when he wants to stop. There were no inns in those days for travellers to lodge at.

The men who lived in Sodom were most exceedingly wicked, and Lot would have done better if he had avoided them altogether, though they did live in such a beautiful country.

After Lot and Abram had parted, the Lord appeared to Abram again, and blessed him again, and promised that the nation that should descend from him should afterwards possess all the land of Canaan. You will often hear the land of Canaan called "the land of promise," "the promised land." It was called so from this promise which God made to Abram.

After this, Abram removed his tent once more, and went to dwell in a plain belonging to a man called Mamre, an Amorite, near Hebron, some distance west of Sodom and Gomorrah. And he pitched his tent under the shade of a terebinth tree. The country about Hebron is still very fertile and beautiful. The hills are covered with sweet-scented thyme. The vineyards are famous for their grapes, of which the finest raisins are made; olives, figs, pomegranates, apricots and quinces grow in the greatest abundance, and the fields are rich with corn. The people of Hebron, to this day, show travellers a

splendid old oak tree, in one of the fields, and say it is the very same under which Abram pitched his tent ; but this cannot be true, for no tree could live so long, and Abram's tree was a terebinth, which is not like an oak tree, for it has long narrow leaves, and its fruit is a small berry growing in bunches like grapes.

Meanwhile Lot continued to be the neighbour of the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah ; but he soon fell into trouble ; for there was a great battle between the kings of the countries around, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were defeated and robbed of all that they had, and Lot was taken prisoner with many others and carried off with all his cattle and goods.

A man that escaped, however, came and told Abram, who directly armed all his servants, and set off to rescue Lot ; and Mamre and his two brothers went with Abram to help him.

They had to go a long way before they overtook Lot's captors ; but at last they came up with them, and fought them and drove them away, and set Lot at liberty with his wife and his daughters and all the other prisoners, and also recovered all their goods.

The king of Sodom was very glad to have his property thus restored to him, and he wished to make Abram a present of all the goods he had

recovered ; but Abram said that he would not even accept a thread or a sandal tie from him, but desired that his friend Mamre and his brothers might receive a share for their reward.

Abram would take no presents from the wicked king of Sodom.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE FIFTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

AGAIN the Lord spake unto Abram. He promised Abram that he should have a son, for as yet he was childless, and the Lord said unto him,

“Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if thou art able to number them ; so shall thy seed be.”

And Abram believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

In order that Abram might feel still more certain that it *was* the Lord who had spoken to him in the vision, the Lord commanded Abram to take a heifer, and a she goat, and a ram, and to divide them in half ; also a dove and a young pigeon. All the day Abram watched these dead animals, and drove away the birds of prey who desired to take them.

And in the evening, when the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep ; and the Lord spoke to him again, and foretold to Abram what should happen to his descendants ; that they should be strangers in a land which was not theirs, and should be ill treated there for four hundred years ; after which they should return to Canaan, and possess it, "for the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full."

And when the sun had gone down, and it was quite dark, Abram saw a smoking furnace ; and a lamp of fire passed between the pieces of the animals that Abram had slain.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared again to Abram. Abram fell upon his face and God talked with him, and told him that he should be called *Abraham*, which means a multitude of nations ; and that Sarai should be called *Sarah*, because she should be a mother of nations.

Abraham could hardly believe that God really meant that Sarah should become a mother, for she was a very old woman, ninety years old.

But God said that Sarah should indeed bear a son, the very next year, and that he was to be named Isaac.

"And God left off talking with Abraham ; and God went up from Abraham."



CHAPTER IX.

ON THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

THE Lord appeared again to Abraham, when Abraham was sitting at his tent-door, in the heat of the day, under the shade of the terebinth tree. And he looked up, and saw three men standing near; and he ran to meet them, and bowed to the ground, for he knew that one of them was the Lord; and he said,

“My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread; and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your servant.”

And they said,

“So do as thou hast said.”

And Abraham hastened unto the tent unto Sarah, and said,

“Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.”

“And Abraham ran into the herd, and fetched a calf, tender and good, and gave it unto a young man, and he hasted to dress it.”

"And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree; and they did eat."

"And they said unto him,"

"Where is Sarah thy wife?"

And he said, "Behold, in the tent."

Then the Lord said that Sarah should soon have a son; and Sarah heard this in the tent-door, behind which she was standing; and Sarah laughed to herself when she heard this, for she was such an old woman, she thought it could never be.

And the Lord said unto Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed, will I return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son."

Then Sarah denied, saying, "I laughed not:" for she was afraid.

And the Lord said, "Nay, but thou didst laugh."

How ashamed Sarah must then have felt!

And the men arose and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them on the way. Then the Lord told Abraham that his purpose was to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah,



And they said unto him, "Where is Sarah thy wife?"
And he said, "Behold, in a tent."—P. 32.



and the country round about them, because the wickedness of the people was so great. And the angels went on towards Sodom, but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.

And Abraham drew near to the Lord, and said :

“Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?”

And the Lord said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.”

And Abraham said, “Behold now, I have taken upon myself to speak unto the Lord which am but dust and ashes; peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous, wilt thou destroy all the city, for lack of five?”

And he said, “If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.”

And Abraham spake unto him yet again, and said, “Peradventure there shall be forty found there!”

And the Lord said, "I will not do it for forty's sake."

And Abraham said, "Oh! let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak—Peradventure there shall be thirty found there?"

And he said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

And he said, "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord—Peradventure there shall be twenty found there?"

And he said, "I will not destroy it for twenty's sake."

And Abraham said, "Oh! let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once—Peradventure there shall be found ten?"

And the Lord said, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake."

And the Lord went his way as soon as he had left off speaking to Abraham, and Abraham went back to his tent. Behold how Abraham persevered in prayer; and how merciful and gracious was the Lord.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

In the evening, Lot was sitting at the gate of the city of Sodom, and there came the two angels.

And when Lot saw them, he rose up, and went to meet them, and bowed his face down to the ground before them. Lot begged the angels most humbly to stop the night in his house and to wash their feet.

It was always the custom, and is so still, to bring water to wash visitors' feet in those countries; for travellers did not wear shoes and stockings then, but merely a sole of leather called a sandal, bound by "latchets" or ties round the foot, and the ways were hot and dusty.

At first the angels refused, but Lot pressed them so urgently that they did go into his house, and he made them a feast.

At night the angels told Lot that the Lord had sent them to destroy Sodom, because the wickedness of the people had become so exceedingly great; and they told Lot to leave the city, and escape with his wife, and his daughters and their husbands.

So Lot went out and spoke to the husbands of his married daughters, and told them to leave the town directly, for the Lord would destroy it. But these men believed Lot no more than the wicked people believed Noah before the flood. They thought their father-in-law was mocking them.

Very early in the morning the angels hastened Lot and told him to get up directly and flee with his wife and his two daughters, who were unmarried and living in the house with him, lest they should be destroyed in the punishment of the city ; and because Lot lingered, and seemed unwilling to go, the angels took hold of his hand and the hands of his wife and daughters, for the Lord was very merciful unto them, and they led them out of the city.

Then they told them to escape for their lives and not to look back, nor stay in the plain, but to hurry up unto the mountain for fear they should be burnt in the destruction of the cities.

Then Lot entreated that he might not be sent away so far ; he said he was afraid to go into the mountain, and asked leave to go into a little village called Zoar. And the Lord allowed him to do so, and promised Lot that he would not destroy Zoar.

Do not you think Lot might have trusted that the Lord would have taken care of him in the lonely mountain, when he had shown him such great kindness already ?

Lot was not so full of faith as Noah, nor as his uncle Abraham.

“The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.”

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah,—not water,—but burning fire and brimstone ; and those cities, and all the plain, and all the people, and everything that grew out of the ground, were burned up, and utterly destroyed.

And Lot's wife was disobedient to the command of the angels ; she looked back to see the fearful fire, grieving at the punishment of those wicked cities, and she was turned into a pillar of salt. (Heb. x. 39 ; Luke xvii. 32.)

Early that morning Abraham got up and looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and behold ! the whole country of the plain was smoking like the smoke of a great furnace.

And Lot was so terrified that he left Zoar, though the Lord had promised to keep him in safety there ; and fled into the mountain, and lived in a cave with his two daughters.

Nothing now is to be seen of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the fruitful and beautiful plain where those cities once stood. Look at the map of the Holy Land, and you will see a very large lake called the Dead Sea. Under those waters, most probably at the lower end, are buried the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the cities of the plain.

The Dead Sea is surrounded by

barren rocks, except in a few spots where there happen to be springs of fresh water. In those spots the soil is covered with plants and the thickets are full of birds, but everywhere else the shores are still a dismal solitude.

The waters are of a greenish colour, with a shining, oily appearance, and the taste of them is exceedingly salt and bitter ; they are so buoyant, or supporting, that people who have never swam before, can swim or float in them without any difficulty. No fish can live in the Dead Sea, and no cattle can drink of its waters. Sometimes large pieces of an inflammable substance, called bitumen, float up from the bottom of the lake.*

A kind of tree, bearing a very curious fruit, called the apples of Sodom, grows on the borders of the Dead Sea ; it is found nowhere else in Palestine. This fruit grows in bunches of three or four together, and when ripe looks like a large smooth yellow apple, very tempting to eat ; but when it is gathered, or pressed in the hand, it bursts with a puff, and nothing is left but the thin rind and a few fibres, for it is filled chiefly with air. The pod contains a fine silky looking stuff with the seeds. The Arabs gather this silk and twist it into matches for their guns. They

♦ Robinson's Biblical Researches.

like it better than a common match, because it takes fire so easily that it does not even need sulphur to be mixed with it.*

Perhaps you would like to read a traveller's description of his view of the Dead Sea. Mr. Robinson says :—

“ While the rest were busy in packing the tent and luggage, and loading the animals, I set off on foot, and ascended the pass alone. Three-quarters of an hour brought me to the top of the cliff, whence we had yesterday enjoyed our first view of the sea. Here I sat down upon the brink of the precipice, and looked abroad again upon the sea, and its wild craggy shores. Lovely the scene is not, yet magnificently wild, and in the highest degree stern and impressive. Shattered mountains, and the deep chasms of the rent earth, are here tokens of the wrath of God and of his vengeance upon the guilty inhabitants of the plains, when, ‘ turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, he condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto them that after should live ungodly.’ ”
(2 Peter ii. 6.)†

The Dead Sea is about 40 miles long, and 18 wide.‡

* Robinson.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

IN the next year, when Abraham was one hundred years old, Sarah his wife had a son, as the Lord had promised; and Abraham called him Isaac. And Sarah was very happy indeed when she had a son of her own.

Though Sarah had never had a child of her own till Isaac was born, yet another wife of Abraham's, an Egyptian slave, called Hagar, had already given him a son, several years before. In those days it was not thought wrong for a man to have two or three wives if he pleased. Still, the first wife was considered the mistress of the household, the other wives being in subjection to her, particularly if they happened to be slaves, like Hagar.

Now when Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast, and Sarah saw Ishmael, which was the name of Hagar's son, mocking and laughing. Very probably he was jealous of the little Isaac, and did not like to have a step-brother, to whom he knew he must give way, because he was the son of Abraham's chief wife.

Sarah was very angry, and she said to Abraham,

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, Isaac."

But it was very grievous to Abraham to do this; for he loved his son Ishmael, and Hagar also.

And God said unto Abraham,

"Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman. In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

This means, that the promises which God had made unto Abraham (Rom. ix. 7, 8) should be inherited through Isaac's descendants, not through Ishmael's; though at the same time the Lord promised that Ishmael's descendants should also become a nation, because he was Abraham's son.

Then Abraham hesitated no longer; and rising up early in the morning, before the fierce heat of the day had begun, he took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave them to Hagar, putting them upon her shoulder; and he sent her away with her son Ishmael.

And Hagar departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

And Ishmael became very thirsty; for not one drop of water was left in the bottle. They

had drunk it all, and Hagar could find no spring to fill it at.

Then she laid the poor boy, who was quite dying of thirst, under the shade of one of the broom bushes.* And she went and sat down weeping a good way off; for she said, "Let me not see the death of the child."

"And God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her,"

"What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand, for I will make him a great nation."

And God caused her to see a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

And the Lord took care of Ishmael; and he grew, and lived in the wilderness of Paran, and became an archer. And his mother chose him a wife from among her own nation, the Egyptians.

When Isaac was grown up to be a young man, the Lord tried the faith of Abraham. The Lord told Abraham to take his son, his only son Isaac,

* Retem: these bushes still grow plentifully in those deserts, and Ishmael's descendants, the Arabs, to this day, sleep and rest under a bush of retem to protect them from the heat of the sun.—ROBINSON.

whom he loved so much, and to travel into the land of Moriah, and there to offer up Isaac for a burnt offering, upon a mountain which he would show him.

Oh! what a sad trial for Abraham! But he did not hesitate a moment, as Lot had done when the angels bade him leave Sodom; he rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took his son Isaac, and two men-servants, and some wood with which to make the fire, and set off upon his sad journey.

After Abraham had travelled three days, he saw the mountain some distance off. Then Abraham told his servants to wait with the ass till he came back to them. And he took the wood, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they both went together up Mount Moriah.

On the way Isaac said, "My father."

And Abraham said, "Here am I, my son."

Then Isaac said, "I see the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

And Abraham said, "My son, *God* will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

And when they were come to the place which God had told him of, Abraham built an altar of

stones, and laid the wood in order upon it, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him upon the wood on the altar. Did Isaac struggle? He might have done so if he had pleased, for he was a strong young man, and his father quite old: but no, he was patient and obedient; he knew his father would not do anything that was not right.

Then Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven, and said, "Abraham! Abraham!"

And he said, "Here am I."

"And the angel said, "Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and lo! a ram caught by the horns in a thicket behind him.

And Abraham took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son.

And Abraham called that place "Jehovah-jireh," which means, "The Lord will provide."

Many, many years after, the beautiful temple of Jerusalem was built upon this spot, and not far from it was crucified the Lord of Glory, who

died for our transgressions. God so loved the world, that he spared not his *own* Son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham again out of heaven, and blessed him with great blessings, because of his obedience.

So Abraham and Isaac went back to the two servants, and they all went joyfully home to Beersheba, a fertile place on the borders of the desert, where they then lived, and where Abraham had planted a grove.

Here Isaac afterwards lived, and dug a well. Two ancient wells still exist at Beersheba, and are in use to this very day.*

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE TWENTY-THIRD AND TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

SARAH died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years, at Hebron, and Abraham buried her in the cave of Machpelah, which he bought from a Hittite called Ephron.

You remember how, many years back, Abraham had left his home and all his friends to go into

* Robinson.

the land of Canaan, as God had commanded him. Isaac was now about forty years old, and Abraham was afraid that he might marry a Canaanitish woman. For the Canaanites did not worship God; they worshipped idols, and were very wicked. So three years after Sarah's death, Abraham called his head servant, who managed all his house, and ordered him to go into the land of Mesopotamia, where Abraham's relations lived, and to choose a wife for Isaac from among them. He also made his servant promise never to take Isaac back to live in Mesopotamia, because God had promised him that Isaac's descendants should possess the land of Canaan.

The servant promised to do all that his master desired; and he took ten camels, and servants, and set off upon his long journey.

At last he came to Haran, in Mesopotamia, where Bethuel lived. Bethuel was the son of Abraham's brother, Nahor, and was therefore Abraham's nephew.

It was evening when the servant, whose name was Eliezer (ch. xv. 2), reached his journey's end. He made his camels kneel down to rest by the side of a well, outside the city. Water is scarce and precious in those hot, dry coun-

tries, and Eliezer knew that the women of Haran would soon be coming to the well to draw up water for themselves and their flocks.

Then Eliezer prayed to God, and said, "Oh Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; and let it be that the maiden to whom I shall say, 'Let down thy pitcher that I may drink,' and she shall say 'Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also,' let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac, and by this I shall know that thou hast shown kindness unto my master."

Before he had finished his prayer, Bethuel's daughter, whose name was Rebekah, came out of the city with her pitcher on her shoulder, to draw water out of the well. She was a very beautiful young woman and not married.

She went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and was coming up the steps again, when Eliezer ran to meet her, and said,

"Let me drink, I pray thee, a little water out of thy pitcher."

And Rebekah said,

"Drink, my lord," and she let down the pitcher upon her hand and gave him to drink.

When he had finished drinking, she said, "I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking."

And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again to the well for more water, till all the thirsty camels were satisfied.

And Eliezer looked at her in wonder.

And when the camels had done drinking, he took a golden ring and two golden bracelets, and gave them to her, and said,

"Whose daughter art thou? Tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?"

Then she told him that she was Bethuel's daughter, and that there was plenty of room in her father's house, and plenty of straw and provender for the camels.

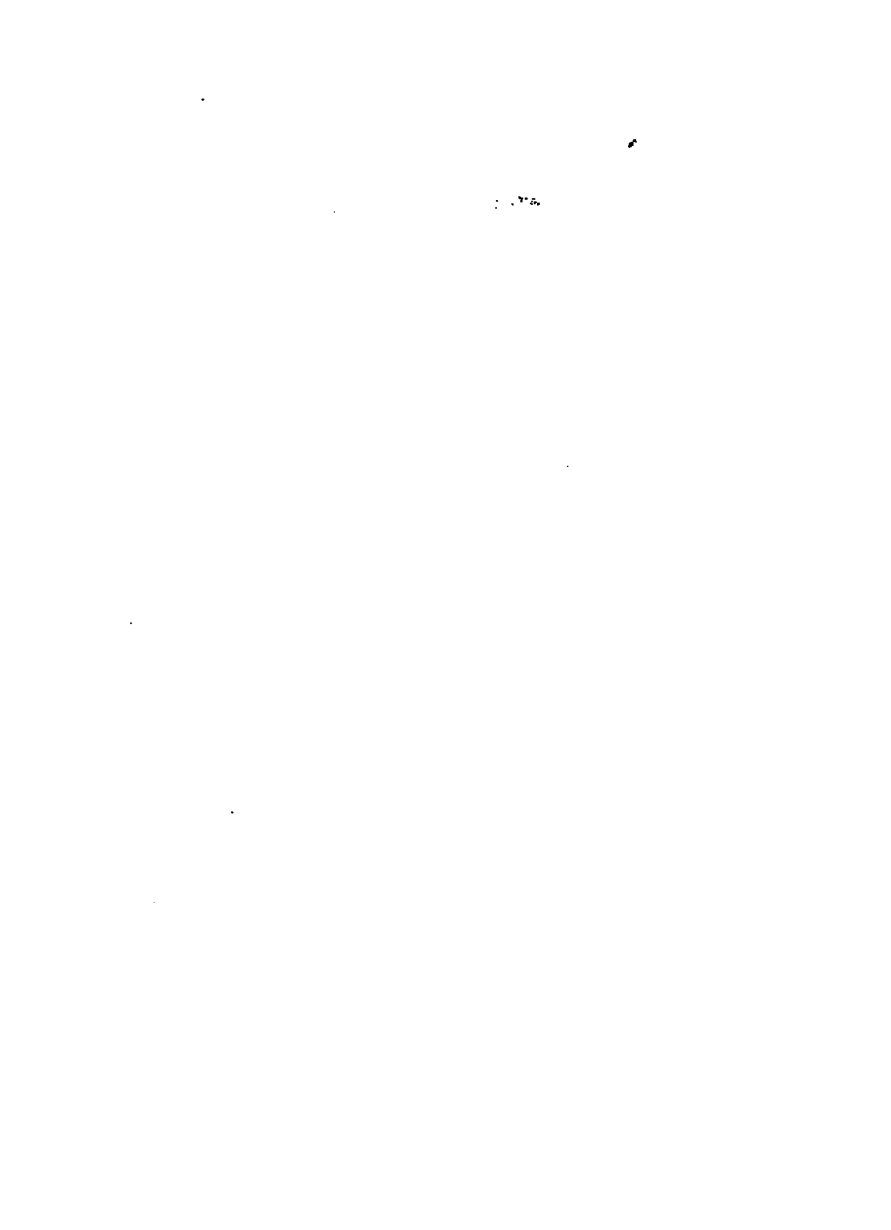
Then Eliezer was very glad, and he bowed down his head and worshipped the Lord and said,

"Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who in his mercy and truth, hath led me to the house of my master's relations."

And the maiden ran home, and told what had happened. She had a brother named Laban.



" And Eliezer looked at her in wonder."—P. 48.



and when he heard what his sister said, and saw the ring and the bracelets, he ran to Eliezer at the well, and said,

“Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house and room for the camels.”

So Eliezer went with Laban, and Laban ungirded the camels and gave them straw and provender, and brought water to wash Eliezer's feet, and the men's feet that were with him; and meat was set before Eliezer to eat; but he said he would not eat till he had told his master's errand.

Laban said, “Speak on.”

Then Eliezer said, “I am Abraham's servant; and the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old, and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me promise not to take a wife for his son, from among the Canaanitish women, in whose land he lives, but to go to his relations for a wife for his son.”

Eliezer went on to tell them about his prayer to God, and how Rebekah had come to the well,

and said the very words that he had prayed God the young woman might say whom he had appointed for Isaac's wife.

"And now," said Eliezer, "if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me ; and if not, tell me ; that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

Then Laban and his father Bethuel said,

"The thing cometh from the Lord, we have nothing to say ; behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her and go ; and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken."

And when Abraham's servant heard these words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. Then he brought out presents of gold and silver ornaments, and clothes for Rebekah, and he gave to her mother and her brother precious gifts also. Then they eat and drank.

And in the morning, Eliezer wished to set off upon his journey home ; Laban and his mother wished to keep Rebekah ten days longer, but Eliezer begged that they would not hinder him from going back to his master. Then they called Rebekah and asked her whether she would go with Eliezer. And she said she would. Then they blessed her, saying,

"Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of

thousands of millions ; and may thy children have the victory over them that hate them."

And Rebekah arose and her maidens, and they rode upon the camels, and followed Eliezer, and they all set off upon the journey.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the fields at even tide, and he looked up, and saw the camels coming, and he went forward to meet them.

Rebekah saw him, and asked the servant who he was ? When she heard it was Isaac, she got off her camel, and put her veil over her face.

Then the servant told Isaac all that he had done, and Isaac took Rebekah in to his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife ; and he loved her, and was comforted after his mother's death.

Four years after Isaac's marriage, Abraham died at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years, and his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him by the side of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH, TWENTY-SIXTH, AND
TWENTY-SEVENTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

AND Isaac was very rich in flocks, and herds, and servants. He also sowed fields of corn,

which brought great harvests, for the Lord blessed him. But it was a long time before he had any children. At last, twenty years after he had married Rebekah, she had two sons, who were twins. The eldest was called Esau, and the youngest Jacob. Before they were born, the Lord had told Rebekah that the youngest should be chief over the eldest.

The boys grew up to be men in time. Esau was very fond of hunting, and spent most of his time from home, wandering about the country, in search of game ; but Jacob stayed in the tents and minded the flocks and herds, and his mother loved him best ; but Isaac loved Esau best. When Esau was forty years old, he married two women of the country, who were idolaters ; they did not know the true God. It was very wrong of Esau to do this ; and his father and mother were sadly grieved that their son had chosen his wives so ill.

Now when Isaac was about one hundred and forty years old, and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau, and said to him, "Behold I am old, and I may die any day, now therefore, I pray thee, take thy bow and arrow, and go out and hunt me some venison, and make me savoury meat such as I like, and I will bless thee before I die."



And Esau went out to hunt for venison, and Rebekah heard what Isaac had said.

Now Rebekah did not wish Esau to get the blessing, for she loved Jacob the best; and besides, she remembered that the Lord had said that the eldest was to serve the youngest, which means that the youngest was to be the chief or head of the family, and this could not be, she thought, if Esau received the blessing.

So, instead of leaving it to the Lord to bring to pass what he had foretold as it should please him, and which the Lord could surely have done without the help of Rebekah, she took it upon herself to gain the chief blessing for her favourite son by means of deceit and falsehood, which can never be pleasing to the Lord of Truth.

Esau did not deserve this blessing, however, because he had sold it to Jacob long before, for a mess of pottage, one day when he came in from hunting, very tired and hungry (chap. xxv. 36). This showed that he set very little value by it. Therefore, since he had sold it to Jacob, it could be no longer his, but his brother's, and it was cheating Jacob to try now to get it again for himself. He should have told his father that the blessing was his no longer, for that he had parted with it to his brother

But Esau's ill behaviour was no excuse for Jacob's falsehood. He ought not to have obeyed his mother in what was wrong, and he had many sorrows to bear in consequence of his sin, as you will find farther on.

I will tell you what Rebekah did. She called Jacob, and told him that Isaac was going to give the blessing to Esau ; and then she commanded him to go to the flock, and fetch two kids, and she would make savoury meat such as Isaac loved, and that then Jacob should take it to his father and receive his blessing.

And Jacob said to his mother, " Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man ; peradventure my father will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing."

But Rebekah told him to obey her, and fetch the kids, and she would take all the blame upon herself.

Then Jacob fetched the kids, and his mother cooked them.

When the meat was ready, Rebekah took a beautiful dress of Esau's which she had in the tent, and put it upon Jacob, and she put some of the hairy skins of the kids upon his hands and the smooth of his neck, and sent him to Isaac

with the savoury meat. Goats in hot climates have very fine silky hair, and that of the kids is short and thin, so that Jacob's hands and neck really felt like Esau's.

When Jacob came to his father, he said, "My father."

And Isaac said, "Here am I ; who art thou, my son ?"

And Jacob said, "I am Esau, thy first-born ; I have done as thou didst say to me. Arise, I pray thee, and eat of my venison, and bless me."

And Isaac said to Jacob, "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?"

Then Jacob said, very deceitfully and hypocritically, that he had found the venison so soon, because God had brought it before him.

And Isaac said, "Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be really my son Esau or not."

Jacob did so ; and when Isaac had felt him, he was deceived by the hairy skins and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

Still he did not feel quite sure, and asked Jacob again if he were really Esau.

Jacob repeated the falsehood, and said again that he was.

Then Isaac eat the meat which Jacob had brought him, and drank some wine, and kissed Jacob and blessed him, and prayed that God would give him plenty of everything, and make him the chief of his mother's children.

Isaac had finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had only just left his father, when Esau who had returned from hunting, came in with the venison which he had dressed for his father, saying,

"Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, and bless me."

And Isaac said, "Who art thou?"

And Esau said, "I am thy first-born son, Esau."

Then Isaac trembled very exceedingly, for he saw there had been some mistake, and that he had given the blessing to Jacob instead of to Esau. He told Esau what he had done, and that it could not be undone.

When Esau heard this, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said,

"Bless me, even me also, oh my father!"

And Isaac said, "Thy brother came cunningly and hath taken away thy blessing."

And Esau said, "Hast thou not kept a blessing for me?"

And Isaac said to Esau, "Behold, I have

made him thy lord, and all his relations have I given unto him for servants, and with corn and wine have I supported him, and what can I do now for thee, my son ?”

And Esau said, “ Hast thou but one blessing, my father ?—Bless me, even me also, oh, my father !”

And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

Then Isaac gave Esau a blessing ; but it could not be so great a one as that which he had already given to Jacob, for both brothers could not be the chief.

Now Esau hated Jacob, because he had received the chief blessing ; and he determined that he would kill him as soon as his father Isaac was dead. He even said this aloud, and some person who heard him, told Rebekah of it.

Then Rebekah sent for Jacob, and told him what Esau threatened to do ; and she bade him leave his home and escape to her brother Laban, and stay with him a little while till Esau’s fury was over, and he had forgotten what Jacob had done to him, and then she would send to fetch him home again.

Then she went to Isaac, and said to him, what a sad thing it would be, if Jacob were to follow Esau’s example and marry a Canaanitish woman.

"If ~~he~~ we were to do such a thing," she said, "her life would be no longer any good to her!"

So Isaac sent for Jacob, and forbade him to marry any of the women of the country, and desired him to go to Haran, where Laban lived, and take one of his daughters for his wife. Laban was Jacob's uncle, you know, and therefore Laban's children were first cousins to Jacob and Esau.

Isaac then blessed Jacob again, and prayed to God that he would give him the blessing of Abraham, and that his children might possess the land where he dwelt, and have it for their own.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE TWENTY-EIGHTH AND TWENTY-NINTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

So Jacob left his home at Beersheba, and set off on his journey to Haran.

I have told you that there were no inns then for travellers to stop at, so when Jacob had walked all day, and the sun set, and it was night, he stopped to rest, and he took some stones for a pillow, and lay down on the ground to sleep. And he dreamed that he saw a ladder set upon

the earth. So high was the ladder that the top reached to heaven; and behold! the angels of God went up and down upon it. And the Lord stood above it, and said,

“I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it, and to thy children.”

The Lord God told Jacob that his descendants should be as plentiful as the dust of the earth, and that they should spread northward and southward, and eastward and westward, and that in them all the families of the earth should be blessed.

You remember the promise which God made to Abraham? You see that this promise to Jacob was the very same which God made to Abraham, when he bade him leave his home at Haran and go into Canaan. This precious promise of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was now renewed to Jacob.

The Lord God also told Jacob that he would be with him, and keep him wherever he went.

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he was afraid, and said to himself:

“Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not! How dreadful is this place! This is no other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!”

Early in the morning he got up, and took the stone which had served him for a pillow and set it up, and poured oil upon the top of it; and he called the name of the place Beth-el, that is to say, "The House of God."

And Jacob determined, that if the Lord would take care of him, and bring him home in safety to his father's house, he would serve him; and that he would give a tenth part of all that God should give him for the service of God.

Then Jacob went on his journey, and travelled until he came unto the east country. And he saw a well, and by the well were lying three flocks of sheep. The top of the well was covered by a large stone, and the sheep were waiting till the shepherds should come and take off the stone and give them water.

I have told you how scarce and precious water is in those countries. The stone was put on the top of the well to prevent anything falling in, and also to prevent the water being wasted. The same thing is done in Palestine to this very day.* No doubt it was the same well at which

* Over most of the cisterns is laid a broad and thick flat stone, with a round hole cut in the middle, forming the mouth of the cistern. This hole we found in many cases covered with a heavy stone, which it would require two or three men to roll away. (Robinson's Biblical Researches.)

Eliezer had met Jacob's mother Rebekah years before.

When the shepherds came, Jacob asked them to what place they belonged. And they told him that Haran was its name. How glad Jacob must have felt when he heard this, and how grateful to God for having brought him safely to his journey's end.

"Do ye know Laban, the grandson of Nahor?" asked Jacob.

"We know him," said the shepherds.

"Is he well?" asked Jacob.

"Yes," said the shepherds; "he is well, and look, Rachel his daughter is coming with his sheep."

While they were talking, Rachel came up with her father's sheep, for she kept them; and when Jacob saw his cousin coming, he rolled away the large stone from off the well, and gave all her sheep water.

Then he kissed her, and wept for joy, and told her that he was the son of her aunt Rebekah.

And Rachel ran home and told her father.

And when Laban heard that Jacob was come, he ran out to meet him, and kissed and embraced him, and brought him to his house. And Jacob told Laban all that had happened to him.

Now when Jacob had remained with Laban a month, Laban said to Jacob that it was not right that he should serve him for nothing any longer, and he asked him what wages he would like to have.

Laban had two daughters, Leah the eldest, and Rachel the youngest ; and Jacob loved Rachel very much, and she was very beautiful. Leah was not pretty.

Jacob told Laban that he would serve him for seven years, if he would, at the end of that time, give him Rachel for his wife.

Laban promised that he would do so ; and Jacob worked hard seven years for Rachel, and he loved her so dearly that this long time seemed only a few days to him.

When the seven years were over, Laban made a grand feast, and invited all his neighbours and friends ; but instead of marrying Jacob to Rachel he married him to Leah. Leah was covered with a thick veil, so that Jacob did not find out the deceit till after the marriage was over. Then he was sadly grieved, and asked Laban why he had deceived him ?

Laban made the excuse that in his country it was not the custom for the younger sister to be married before the eldest ; it was a thing that

was never done ; but that if Jacob would promise to serve him seven years more, he should marry Rachel at the end of a week. Jacob agreed ; and seven days after his marriage with Leah, Rachel also became his wife.

It was very wrong of Laban to act so deceitfully towards Jacob. It is very wrong to make promises which we do not intend to keep. Do you recollect how Jacob deceived his father Isaac about the blessing ? Now you see he was also deceived himself.

CHAPTER XV.

ON THE THIRTIETH TO THE THIRTY-FIFTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

WHEN the seven years which Jacob had promised to serve Laban for Rachel were over, he wished to return to his own country with his wives and his twelve children. But Laban entreated him to stay longer ; so Jacob said that he would yet stay, if Laban would give him a share of his cattle, and of his sheep, and of his goats, for his wages.

Laban agreed ; and at the end of six more years Jacob's share had increased so much, he had such numbers of cattle and sheep and goats,

so many more than Laban, that Laban and his sons became very jealous and angry.

Jacob saw that they were angry.

And the Lord said unto Jacob, "Return into the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred."

Then Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah, and told them that the Lord God had told him to return to his own country, and that now he would stay no longer with Laban, who had not behaved well to him.

Rachel and Leah said they would go very willingly. Accordingly one day, when Laban was away at some distance, shearing his sheep, Jacob put his wives and children upon camels, and took all his goods and his cattle, and stole away from Haran.

Laban did not know that Jacob was gone till three days after. Then he called together his relations, and set off to pursue him. In seven days they overtook Jacob at Mount Gilead.

And God came to Laban in a dream by night, and told him to take heed and not quarrel with Jacob.

Therefore Laban spoke gently with Jacob, and asked him why he had stolen away so hastily, without letting him take leave of his daughters and grandchildren?

Jacob said that he was afraid Laban would have taken his wives from him by force. And then he reproached Laban for his conduct to him, and reminded him how he had cheated him of his wages, and how after his many years of hard service, he had grudged him the increase of his cattle and sheep.

And Laban answered, "These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and all that thou seest is mine; I cannot do any harm to these my daughters and the children which they have borne; now therefore let us make an agreement together."

Jacob promised his uncle Laban, that he would always treat his daughters kindly, and not take any other wives.

Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon Mount Gilead, and called Laban and his relations to a feast, and they all eat together. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and daughters, and blessed them. And Laban departed, and returned to his own home.

And Jacob travelled onwards to a place which he called Mahanaim, for the angels of God met him there. And he sent messengers from thence to the land of Seir at the south of the Dead Sea where Esau lived. Jacob ordered his messengers

to tell Esau that he was coming home from Haran where he had been living these twenty years, and that he had plenty of oxen and sheep, and men-servants and maid-servants.

When the messengers came back, they said that they had spoken to Esau, and that he was coming with four hundred men to meet his brother.

Jacob was much distressed when he heard this. He was greatly afraid that Esau was coming to attack him, and punish him for having taken his birthright. He remembered that twenty years ago, Esau in his great anger had threatened to kill him.

Then Jacob prayed to God most earnestly, and said,

“O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac—the Lord who saidst to me, ‘Return to thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee’—I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother Esau ; for I am afraid of him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, ‘I will surely deal well with thee, and make thy seed to be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’”

The next morning, Jacob sent forward a present to his brother Esau. Two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats ; two hundred ewes, and twenty rams ; thirty camels with their colts ; forty cows, and ten bulls ; twenty she-asses and ten foals. He sent a servant with each drove, and he ordered them to tell Esau when he should meet them, and inquire whose cattle they were, that they were "his servant Jacob's, a present sent unto my lord Esau ;" and that Jacob was coming behind.

Jacob thought that all these presents would please Esau, and make him forget his anger, and forgive him.

The next morning Jacob looked and saw Esau coming with four hundred men. And Jacob went forward, before his wives and children, and bowed himself down to the ground before Esau seven times. Then Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him ; and they wept. Esau was very glad to see Jacob again ; he had quite forgiven him.

And Esau saw the women and children, and he said,

"Who are these with thee ?"

Jacob said, "The children which God hath graciously given thy servant."

Then Jacob's wives and children came near, and bowed down before Esau very humbly.

Then Esau asked, "What meanest thou by all this drove which I met?"

"These are to find grace in the eyes of my lord," replied Jacob.

And Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast for thyself."

But Jacob entreated Esau so earnestly to accept the present, that Esau at last consented and took it.

Then Esau asked Jacob to go with him to his home at Mount Seir. But Jacob excused himself, saying, that the children and cattle were very tender and must travel slowly. Esau then offered some of his armed men as a guard; but Jacob thought it more prudent to travel alone. So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.

Jacob continued his journey towards his father's home. He travelled slowly, and often stopped for some time at different places. At one place called Salem, he bought some land, and built an altar there to the Lord. At another place called Bethlehem, his beloved wife Rachel died and was buried, and Jacob set up a pillar over her grave. Just before her death, Benjamin her second son, was born. Jacob loved Joseph

and Benjamin more than all his other children, because they were the sons of Rachel. The spot where Rachel is buried is still pointed out at Bethlehem. The Moslems have built a small stone building over it, and the Jews still make pilgrimages to it. At Bethlehem, above six hundred years after Rachel's death, David, king of Israel, was born; and more than a thousand years after this, there also took place the great event of our Saviour's birth.

At last Jacob reached his own old home at Hebron. Isaac was still alive, and must have been very glad to see Jacob once more, and also his children. We are not told whether Rebekah lived to see Jacob again or not. Isaac died at the age of one hundred and eighty years. And his sons Jacob and Esau buried him in the cave of Machpelah by the side of his father Abraham, and there Rebekah was buried also.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE THIRTY-SEVENTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

B.C. 1728.

I HAVE told you that Jacob loved Rachel's children more than Leah's. Joseph he loved the

most of all, for he was a very good and dutiful child, very gentle and pious : very different from his elder brethren, who were fierce and wicked and envious ; they hated Joseph, and could not even speak peaceably to him, for they were jealous of their father's affection for him.

When Joseph was seventeen years old, his father made him a pretty coat of many colours ; he was keeping the flocks with his brethren, and he dreamed that he was binding sheaves with his brethren, and that his sheaf stood up, and his brothers' sheaves stood round about, and bowed down before it. When Joseph told this dream to his brethren, they were very angry.

"What!" said they, "shalt thou reign over us?"

And they hated him more than before.

And Joseph dreamed again, that he saw the sun, moon, and stars bow down before him ; and this second dream he told to his father and to his brothers. And his father said,

"What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? —Shall I and thy mother and brethren come indeed to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

Then his brethren were more angry and envious than ever.

After this, his brethren went to feed the flocks

at a place called Shechem, about sixty miles north of Hebron. Whilst they were there, Jacob sent Joseph to see them, and to inquire how they were, and to bring him back word, for the people near Shechem were their enemies.

When these wicked young men saw Joseph coming they said to each other, "Behold, here comes this dreamer of dreams!—Let us kill him, and throw him into some pit, and we will say that some wild beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

But Reuben, who was not quite so bad as the rest, said, "Do not let us kill him—do not let us shed his blood—let us put him down this pit in the wilderness. We will not kill him with our own hands."

Reuben intended to take Joseph out again, as soon as his brothers were gone, and bring him safe back to his father.

When Joseph came up to his brethren, they seized hold of him, and took off his beautiful coat, and put him down into the pit. The pit was quite dry—there was no water in it.

When Reuben saw him, as he thought, safe at the bottom of the pit, he went away, that he might get back unperceived when the others were gone, and take poor Joseph out.

Then the brothers sat down to eat their dinner. Whilst they were eating, they saw a company of Ishmaelite merchants coming, with their camels laden with spices, and sweet smelling gums called balm and myrrh, which they were taking to sell in Egypt. These Ishmaelites were of the family of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whose mother and whose wife were, you remember, both of them Egyptian women.

Judah, one of the brothers, said, "What is the good of killing Joseph? Come, let us sell him to these Ishmaelites. Do not let us kill him, for he is our brother."

The others agreed ; so they pulled Joseph out of the pit, and asked the merchants whether they would buy him?

Joseph was a beautiful boy, and when the merchants saw him, they agreed to give his brothers thirty pieces of silver for him, which is about £2. 6s. of our money.

Think what a terrible thing for the poor boy to be sold to strangers!—to be carried away to a foreign land, far from his dear father that he loved so much, with no hope of ever seeing him again; and to think that they were his brothers who had done this cruel deed! Joseph entreated and implored them not to send him away; he

wept so bitterly, and was in such anguish, that you might have thought his distress would have melted a heart of stone! But his cruel brothers had no pity. The merchants paid them the money; poor Joseph was lifted upon the back of one of the camels, crying sadly, the merchants set off again, and his cruel brothers, his father, and his own little brother Benjamin, that he loved so much, were all left far behind, while the camels travelled slowly on and on, till at length they reached Egypt.

Meanwhile, Reuben had come back to the pit, when all had left it, and behold, Joseph was not there! Then Reuben tore his clothes for sorrow; and he went to his brothers, and said, "The child is not there!—and I, whither shall I go?"

But the other brothers took Joseph's coat, and they killed a kid, and dipped the coat in the blood, and took it home to their father, and said, "We found this. Is it Joseph's coat or not?—you know."

Then Jacob said, "It is my son's coat! Some wild beast hath devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces."

Then he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth for mourning; and he mourned bitterly for

Joseph many days. And his sons and daughters tried to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning."

Thus his father wept for him.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE THIRTY-NINTH AND FORTIETH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

B. C. 1729.

WHEN the merchants reached Egypt, they sold Joseph to a rich man called Potiphar. He was captain of the guard to Pharaoh. Pharaoh was king of Egypt. The word Pharaoh is the Egyptian name for king. The kings of Egypt are all called Pharaoh in Scripture.

Joseph behaved so well, and served Potiphar so honestly, that his master, as Joseph grew up to be a man, left everything in his charge. Thus Joseph managed everything, and everything he managed, prospered, for the blessing of the Lord was upon him. Potiphar's cattle, and his corn, and all his crops, prospered, and everything in his house prospered; and he valued and loved Joseph very much, and was very kind indeed

to him, and Joseph was very grateful to his master.

But Potiphar had a very wicked wife, and she quarrelled with Joseph because he was so good, which is often the case with wicked people; and though Joseph always behaved most respectfully to her, she was determined to bring him into disgrace with his master, her husband. So one day when Potiphar came home, she told him that whilst he was away Joseph had been very rude indeed to her, and had mocked her, and ill-treated her.

Potiphar believed all that his wife told him, for he did not know what a bad woman she was; and he was exceedingly angry with Joseph, and sent him to prison.

But the Lord was with Joseph in his misfortunes, as he had been with him in his prosperity. He watched over him in the prison as he had done in Potiphar's palace, for the Lord always takes care of those that love and fear Him.

Therefore the keeper of the prison was very kind to Joseph, and soon he trusted him with the care of all the other prisoners, and made him master of everything; and whatever Joseph did, the Lord made it to prosper, as had been the case in Potiphar's house.

Now after these things, it came to pass that Pharaoh was very much displeased with his chief butler and his chief baker, and he sent them to the same prison to which Joseph had been sent. The keeper of the prison put them under Joseph's charge, and he served them.

After they had been some time in prison, they each dreamed a dream the same night; and when Joseph came to see them as usual in the morning, he found them both looking so melancholy, that he asked them, saying,

"Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?"

And they answered, "We have dreamed dreams, and there is no one to interpret them to us."

To interpret, means to explain.

Then Joseph said, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Pray tell me your dreams."

Then the chief butler said that he dreamed that he saw a vine with three branches, which budded and blossomed and brought forth ripe grapes; and that he held Pharaoh's cup in his hand, and pressed the juice of the grapes into the cup, and gave the cup to Pharaoh.

Joseph said, "This is the meaning of your dream. The three branches are three days; in three days Pharaoh will take you out of prison, and you

will go to the palace as before, and give Pharaoh wine to drink out of his cup, as you used to do. —But think of me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness unto me, I pray thee, and make mention of me to Pharaoh, and bring me out of this prison; for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and in this country also I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.”

When the chief baker heard what a pleasant interpretation Joseph had given to the dream of the butler, he thought he would tell his dream also; and he said,

“I dreamed that I had three white baskets on my head; and the uppermost basket was full of all kinds of baked meats for Pharaoh; and the birds came and eat them out of the basket upon my head.”

And Joseph said,

“In three days, Pharaoh will cut off thy head, and hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.”

Three days after this, it was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a great feast to his servants; and he thought of the baker and the butler. The butler he made chief butler again, and he handed wine to Pharaoh as before; but he

hanged the chief baker upon a tree, exactly as Joseph had said; for Joseph had been taught by God the meaning of the dreams, which He had sent on purpose to those two men.

But for all this, the chief butler was so ungrateful that he forgot his promise, and never mentioned about Joseph to the king. So Joseph had to wait in prison two years more. Did he murmur against God? No, indeed!

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON THE FORTY-FIRST CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

B. C. 1715.

THIRTEEN years had now passed since Joseph was brought a poor slave boy into Egypt, and it was two years after the release of the chief butler, when Pharaoh had a very extraordinary dream. He dreamed that he was standing by the banks of the Nile, which is the name of the one only river in all the country of Egypt; and a most important river it is to Egypt, for in that country so little rain falls, that nothing would grow there, were it not that once a year, about September, the Nile overflows its banks, and covers the country with water. In a few

days the water begins to get less deep, till about November the fields are left dry, and covered with rich, brown, fresh earth, ready for planting.

Pharaoh dreamed that whilst he was standing on the banks of this river, he saw seven fine-looking, fat-fleshed kine come out of the river, and they fed upon the green reeds; and behold seven other kine came also up out of the river very lean and wretched-looking; and these seven wretched-looking beasts eat up the seven fat ones.

Then Pharaoh awoke.

He fell asleep again; and this time he dreamed that he saw seven fine ears of corn upon one stalk. There was nothing strange in this, as the Egyptian wheat always bears seven ears upon one stalk, the ground is so very rich; but it was strange that Pharaoh dreamed that seven thin ears, blighted with the east wind, sprang up after them; and these seven thin ears devoured the seven fine ears. After this second dream Pharaoh again awoke.

In the morning he was much troubled in mind about these two dreams, and he sent for all the wise men in Egypt to explain the meaning of them; but there was not one of them that was able to do so.

Then the chief butler remembered Joseph, and

he was very sorry that he had forgotten him so long. And he went to Pharaoh, and told him how Joseph had interpreted the two dreams in the prison, and that his interpretation had turned out perfectly true.

Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was brought in great haste out of the dungeon; and shaved himself, and put on another dress, and came to Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have dreamed a dream, and no one can interpret it; and I have been told that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it."

Then Joseph said, "Do not give the praise of interpreting to me: it is God who gives me power to explain your dream."

Then Pharaoh told his two dreams.

And Joseph said, "The same meaning belongs to both dreams. God hath showed Pharaoh what He is about to do. The seven good kine mean seven years of plenty, and the seven good ears of corn mean seven years of plenty; and the seven lean kine and the seven blighted ears mean seven years of famine.

"Behold there shall be seven years of great plenty through all the land of Egypt, and after these seven years are passed, there shall be seven



"It is God who gives me power to explain your dream."—P. 80,



years of famine; such a dreadful famine, that all the plenty shall be forgotten! And as Pharaoh dreamed it twice, it is a sign that it will soon come to pass.

“Now, therefore, let Pharaoh look out a prudent and wise man, and put overseers under him, and let them gather up the fifth part of the corn in the seven plentiful years, and put it in granaries to keep against the seven years’ famine, so that the people may not perish with hunger.”

And Pharaoh and all his servants thought this advice of Joseph’s was very good: and Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find any man wiser than this man is, in whom is the Spirit of God?”

So Pharaoh appointed Joseph to manage everything, and to do whatever he thought best to be done in all the country.

And Pharaoh took off his ring, and put it upon Joseph’s finger, and clothed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. Then he ordered Joseph to ride in his second chariot, and the officers cried before him, “Bow the knee,” to all the people in the ways.

Thus was Joseph taken out of prison, and made ruler over all the land of Egypt. He was now thirty years old. Pharaoh gave him for

his wife Asenath, the daughter of the priest of On.

Joseph went through all the land of Egypt during the seven plenteous years, when the fields yielded an immense quantity of corn. He gathered corn as if it were the sands of the sea, without number, and stored it up in the different cities of Egypt, as a provision against the famine.

Before the seven plentiful years were over, Joseph had two sons born to him. The eldest he called Manasseh, which means "forgetting;" "For God," saith he, "hath made me forget all my sorrows." And the second he called Ephraim, which means "fruitful;" "For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

And when the seven years of plenty were ended, the seven years of famine began, as Joseph had said. The famine was over all countries, but in Egypt there was bread, because Joseph had stored up so much corn; so there was abundance for all the people in the granaries, though none grew in the fields for seven whole years. And the people of all the neighbouring countries came to Egypt to buy corn, for there was none to be had anywhere else.

CHAPTER XIX.

ON THE FORTY-SECOND CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

B. C. 1707.

THE famine was as great in Canaan as in other countries, and when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he told his sons to go there, and buy corn that they might not all perish with hunger. He little thought that his dear son Joseph was living there, happily and prosperously, for though he had begun to suspect that his other sons had done something to cause their brother's disappearance, and to feel sure that all was not right (Gen. xlii. 36), yet still he did not know that Joseph had been sold, and not slain. Though this knowledge would have been a great comfort to him, his sons had never told him the truth.

So the ten brothers went to buy corn in Egypt; Benjamin, Joseph's youngest brother, stayed at home. Jacob would not send him, for fear any mischief should happen to this darling child of his dear wife Rachel.

After some days' journey the brothers reached Egypt and went with many others to buy corn from Joseph, who was selling it to all. And Joseph's brethren went before Joseph, and bowed

themselves with their faces to the earth. Joseph knew his brethren though they did not know him, and Joseph remembered that long ago, he had dreamed that his brothers should bow down before him ; now it had come to pass.

Joseph pretended to speak very roughly to his brethren, and told them that they were spies, come to spy out the weak places of Egypt that they might attack it.

But they said, very humbly, for they were frightened, "Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons, we are true men, thy servants are no spies."

Then Joseph again said they were spies, but they replied,

"Thy servants are ten of twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan ; and behold the youngest is this day with our father, and one is dead."

Then Joseph said, "This shall prove whether ye are spies or not. By the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go away from here, unless your youngest brother come also. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and the rest of you shall be kept in prison, that it may be proved whether you speak the truth ; if not, by the life of Pharaoh, ye are surely spies."

And he put them all into prison together for three days.

This Joseph did, not because he wanted to revenge himself upon his brothers. He was far too good and kind to wish for revenge. He acted thus in the hopes that fear and unhappiness might make them repent of their wickedness, which it did, as you will see.

The third day, Joseph went to see his brethren, and he said to them, "This do—and live. If ye be true men, let one of you remain here in prison ; and the rest go, and carry corn to the famine of your houses. But bring your youngest brother unto me, so shall I know that ye have told me the truth, and ye shall not die."

The brethren promised to do as Joseph desired.

And they said one to another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he entreated us, and we would not hear !"

And Reuben said, "Did I not speak to you, saying 'do not sin against the child?' and ye would not hear. Therefore, behold also, his blood is required."

They thought that Joseph did not understand the Hebrew tongue, for he had always spoken to them by an interpreter ; but he had not for-

gotten his own native language ; he heard every word that his brothers said, and he was grieved to see them so unhappy ; and he turned away from them and wept. See how sorry he was for them, though they had been so hard-hearted to him, when twenty years before he had besought them piteously to not sell him for a slave.

When Joseph had dried his eyes, he returned to them again and talked to them, and took Simeon from them, and bound him before them. Simeon was the most cruel and fierce of all the brothers, perhaps this was the reason that Joseph chose him to be the prisoner.

Then Joseph ordered their sacks to be filled with corn, and the money which they had paid for the corn to be put into the sacks at the top, and that provisions should be given them for their journey. And they loaded their asses with the sacks and departed.

The first inn they stopped at, one of them opened his sack to give the asses provender, and behold ! there was the money at the top of the sack. Then they were all very much afraid, and they said, "What is this that God hath done unto us ?"

They were frightened, as guilty people generally are, at anything strange that happens to

them, which they cannot understand. They cannot believe that it is for good, for they dare not hope that God will take care of them. "The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth, but the righteous are as bold as a lion."

At last they came back to their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had befallen them; how the "chief man of the country," as they called Joseph, had said they were spies and had put them in prison, and would only let them go on condition that they should bring Benjamin, and that Simeon still remained in prison.

And when they all emptied their sacks, behold every man found his money in his sack; and they were still more frightened.

And Jacob said, "Me have ye bereaved of my children!—Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away! All these things are against me."

And Reuben said, "Slay my two sons, if I bring Benjamin not back to thee; deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again."

But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him in the way, then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE FORTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

B. C. 1707.

THE famine still continued in Canaan, and when Jacob and his family had eaten all the corn which the brothers had brought from Egypt, Jacob desired them to go again and buy a little food. This Judah refused to do unless his father would allow Benjamin to go with them, "For," said he, "the man declared unto us, Ye shall not see my face unless your brother be with you."

And Jacob, who is also called Israel, said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me as to tell the man whether ye had another brother?"

Then they excused themselves, saying that the man had asked so particularly that they could not help telling him, and besides, said they, "Could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?"

And Judah said to his father, "Send the youth with me, and let us arise and be gone, that we may live, and not die, both we and thou and our little ones. I will be surety for him—at my hand thou mayest require him, if I bring him not back and set him before thee, I shall have

sinned against thee for ever. Surely if we had not delayed, we should have been back already again."

Then their father Israel said, "If it must be so, now do this ; take of the best fruits of our land, and carry down as a present to the man, a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds. And take in your hand double money. The money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks take with you ; perhaps it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and go again to the man. And may God, the Almighty, give you favour before the man, that he may send away Simeon and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved."

So the brethren took the present, and double money, and Benjamin, and again set off on their journey to Egypt, and arrived and stood before Joseph.

And when Joseph saw that Benjamin was with them, he told his servants to take them all into his house, and slay and make ready, for that at noon they should eat with him.

So Joseph's brethren were taken to his house. And they were very much afraid, thinking that Joseph had found out about the money being put

back into their sacks, and that he was very angry with them, and meant to make them slaves. It was their evil consciences that made them such cowards. They had sold Joseph for a slave—now they were afraid that their punishment was coming.

So they went to Joseph's steward, and began to explain that it was not their fault that they had taken the money back with them ; they did not know who had put it into their sacks, they said, but that they had brought it with them again this time, besides more money to buy more corn.

Then the steward spoke very kindly to them ; he said, "Peace be with you !—Fear not ; your God and the God of your father, hath given you a hidden treasure in your sacks ; I know you paid the money."

And he brought out Simeon to them, and gave them water, and they washed their feet, which were hot and dusty with the long journey, and he gave provender to the asses. After this the brethren set out the presents they had brought with them for Joseph, for they had been told that he was coming home at noon to dine with them.

When Joseph came in, they brought him the presents, and bowed themselves to the earth.

And he saluted them, asking them of their welfare, and he said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spake?"

And they answered, "Thy servant, our father, is in good health; he is yet alive."

And they bowed themselves and made obeisance.

And Joseph lifted up his eyes, and saw Benjamin, his own mother Rachel's son, and he said, "Is this your younger brother of whom ye told me?—God be gracious to thee, my son!"

Then Joseph went away hastily into his chamber, for he was so glad to see his brother, that he wept for joy, and he was afraid his brothers might find out who he was before he wished, if they saw his tears, therefore he hastened away from them. Then he washed his face, and came out, and refrained himself, and said, "Set dinner on the table."

And they set dinner on one table for Joseph by himself, and on another for his brethren by themselves, and on another for the Egyptians that dined with him by themselves; for the Egyptians thought it an abomination to eat with the Hebrews, because they were shepherds.

And Joseph caused his brothers to sit at table in order, the eldest at the top and the youngest

at the bottom, and they wondered that he knew their ages.

And he sent food to them from his own table, but Benjamin's share was five times as large as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.

CHAPTER XXI.

ON THE FORTY-FOURTH AND FORTY-FIFTH CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

AND Joseph commanded his steward to fill every man's sack with as much corn as it could hold, to put the money they had paid for it in the top of each as before, and to put besides into Benjamin's sack, his own silver cup.

The steward did as Joseph commanded, and the next morning, as soon as it was light, the men went away with their asses.

They had gone but a little way out of the city, when Joseph told his steward to follow them, and when he had overtaken them, to say to them, "Why have ye returned evil for good, taking my lord's cup in which he drinks?—ye have done evil in so doing."

So the steward hastened after them, and spake those words to them, and they answered :

“Wherefore speaketh my lord these words?—Far be it from thy servants to do such a thing! Behold, the money which we found in our sacks we brought back again, how then is it likely we would steal out of thy lord’s housesilver or gold;—With whomsoever of thy servants it shall be found, let him die; and the rest of us will be my lord’s bondsmen.”

And the steward said, “Well now, let it be according to your words. He with whom the cup is found shall be made a slave, but the rest of you shall not be punished.”

Then they each took down his sack from off his ass hastily, and each opened his sack. And the steward searched, beginning at the eldest, and ending at the youngest; and the cup was found, as he knew very well it would be, in Benjamin’s sack. Then all the brothers rent their garments for grief, as is the custom amongst Eastern nations; and each man loaded his ass again, and, full of anguish and alarm, they returned to the city.

And Judah and the rest came to Joseph’s house—for he was still there—and they fell down before him on the ground.

• And Joseph pretended to be very angry, and said, “What is this that ye have done? Know

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE FORTY-FIFTH CHAPTER OF GENESIS.

WHEN Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brethren were come, he was very much pleased; and he desired Joseph to tell his brethren to go back to their home in Canaan, and fetch their father and their wives, and their little ones, and return with them to Egypt, and that he would give them enough and plenty to eat, of all the good of the land.

So Joseph gave them wagons according to the commandment of Pharaoh, that their families might travel in them; and he gave them provision for the way, and changes of dress to each, but to Benjamin he gave five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver, which is equal to about £37 10s. of our money. And to his father, Joseph sent ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father to eat on the journey. So the sons of Jacob returned to Canaan to their father, and told him that Joseph was still alive, and governor of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted; he could not believe such good news could be true. But when he saw the

wagons and the asses that Joseph had sent, his spirit revived again, and he said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive!—I will go and see him before I die."

So Jacob, who is also called Israel, which means "a prince with God," set off upon his journey to Egypt with his whole family, sixty-seven in all, and all that he had. When he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God.

And in the night God spake unto Israel and said "Jacob! Jacob!" And he said, "Here am I."

And God said, "I am God, the God of thy fathers. Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall close thine eyes."

And Jacob left Beersheba, and he, and his family and his cattle continued their journey and came to Egypt, to the land of Goshen.

And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went to meet his father, and presented himself unto him, and he fell on his neck, and wept a good while.

And Israel said unto Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

Thus they met happily again, after a parting of more than twenty years.

Then Joseph told his brethren that he was going back to Pharaoh to tell him of their arrival, and to acquaint him with their being all shepherds, that they might dwell in the land of Goshen ; for the Egyptians hated shepherds because their country had once been conquered by a race of shepherds, who had cruelly oppressed and ill treated them, and from whom they had at last freed themselves about 119 years before. For this reason Joseph thought that his father and his brethren, with their families and cattle would be much safer dwelling in the land of Goshen which bordered upon Canaan, than in any other part of Egypt.

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, saying, "My father and my brethren, and their flocks and their herds and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan, and behold, they are in the land of Goshen."

Then Joseph presented five of his brethren whom he had brought with him to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh said to them, "What is your occupation?"

And they answered, "Thy servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers ; and we are come to dwell in this land ; for thy servants

have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is heavy upon the land of Canaan. Now therefore we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen."

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Thy father and thy brethren are come to thee, the land of Egypt is before thee, in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell ; in the land of Goshen let them dwell ; and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, place them as rulers over my cattle."

And Joseph brought in his father Jacob, and presented him to Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "About how many may be the years of thy life?"

And Jacob said, "The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years ; few and evil have the years of my life been, and they have not reached the number of years of the life of my fathers."

And Jacob went out from the presence of Pharaoh.

And Joseph settled his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the best part of the land of Egypt, as Pharaoh had commanded ; and he nourished the whole family with bread from the store-houses of Egypt.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE FORTY-SEVENTH AND FORTY-EIGHTH
CHAPTERS OF GENESIS.

B. C. 1689.

So the Israelites, or children of Israel, dwelt in the land of Goshen, and they and their cattle increased exceedingly in numbers.

And Jacob lived seventeen years in Egypt, so his age was one hundred and forty-seven years, and then the time drew nigh when he must die. And he called Joseph, and made him promise solemnly not to bury his body in Egypt, but to carry it into Canaan and lay it by the side of his father Isaac in the cave of Machpelah where also his grandfather Abraham had been buried.

After this Joseph heard that his father was very ill, and he went to see his father again, taking with him his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. And when Jacob heard that Joseph was coming he sat up upon his bed to receive him. And when Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" for his eyes were so dim with age that he could not see plainly.

And Joseph said unto his father, "They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place."

And Jacob said, "Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them."

And Joseph brought them near to the old man, and he kissed them and embraced them, and said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see thy face, and lo, God hath showed me also thy children."

And Joseph bowed himself with his face to the earth.

Then he arose, and took Ephraim, the youngest, in his right hand to be opposite Jacob's left, and Manasseh the eldest in his left hand, towards Jacob's right, but Israel crossed his hands and laid his left hand upon the eldest boy's head, and his right hand upon the youngest. And when Joseph saw this, it displeased him, and he tried to remove his father's right hand from Ephraim to Manasseh's head, saying,

"Not so, my father, for this is the first born, put thy right hand upon his head."

But his father refused, for he had done so on purpose, as a sign that the youngest brother should be chief. Then Jacob blessed Joseph and his sons saying, "God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the

lads, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

And Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I die ; but God shall be with you, and bring you again into the land of your fathers ; moreover, I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, the land which I took from the Amorite with my sword and with my bow."

Then Jacob called together all his other sons, and foretold to them, in the spirit of prophecy, what should happen to their descendants. He prophesied that from the family of Judah the Saviour should descend, which prophecy was fulfilled 1689 years after, when Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem Judah of the Virgin Mary, who was of the tribe of Judah.

And when Jacob had made an end of blessing and commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost.

Then Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him and kissed him.

And Joseph commanded his physicians to embalm the body of Jacob. This was a method by which bodies were preserved from corruption. The ancient Egyptians always embalmed the dead bodies of their friends. Numbers of these mummies, as they are called, are found in Egyptian

tombs to this day, many of them extremely ancient. Thirty days the body lay steeped in nitre, and ten days more were employed in anointing it with gums and spices, after which it was bound round with linen bandages, and enclosed in a wooden case. The ancient Egyptians also made mummies of some kinds of animals, which they considered sacred, and worshipped as idols, such as cats, and a bird called "Ibis." Many of these mummies have been brought as curiosities to England, and many are preserved in the British Museum, London.

And when seventy days for embalming and mourning were passed, Joseph requested Pharaoh's permission to carry the body of his father to Canaan to bury it, as he had promised. And Pharaoh gave him leave.

So Joseph and his brethren and all the chief men of Egypt carried the body to Canaan with chariots and horsemen, a very great number; and they buried Israel in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Rebekah had also been buried: after which Joseph and his brethren, and all the Egyptians that had accompanied them, returned to Egypt.

To this very day there is to be seen at Hebron a very large and ancient stone building, which

there is every reason to believe encloses the cave of Machpelah. The Mohammedans hold this place, which they call the "Haram" in the greatest respect: they will not allow any Christian or Jew to enter it; and into the cave itself not even a Mussulman may go. In different parts of the Haram they have built tombs for the patriarchs and their wives, which are covered with splendid green and red silk carpets embroidered with gold, which are sent by the Sultan from Constantinople. There is a small hole in the wall of the Haram through which Jews are allowed to look at certain times.*

The brethren were very much afraid that after their father was dead, Joseph would revenge himself upon them for their ill-treatment of him when he was a boy. They could not believe that he had really forgiven them. Probably they felt in their own hearts that they were incapable of such generous conduct themselves. So they sent a message to Joseph, saying,

"Thy father did command us before his death, saying, Thus shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee, now, the crime of thy brethren, and their sin, though they did evil unto thee. And

* Robinson's Biblical Researches.

now, we pray thee, forgive the crime of the servants of the God of thy fathers."

And Joseph was so grieved that they should yet suspect him of intending evil towards them, after all the kindness he had showed them, that he wept.

And his brethren came, and fell down before him, and said, "Behold, we are thy servants!"

And Joseph said, "Fear not; am I in the place of God? Ye indeed contrived evil against me, but God contrived it for good, to preserve alive many people. Now, therefore, fear ye not, I will nourish you and your children." And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them.

And Joseph and his brethren continued to dwell in Egypt. And Joseph lived a hundred and ten years, and saw his grand-children and great great grand-children.

Just before his death, he sent for his brethren and said to them, "I am dying! And God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, into the land which he promised to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob. God will surely visit you, and then you shall carry my bones up to Canaan with you."

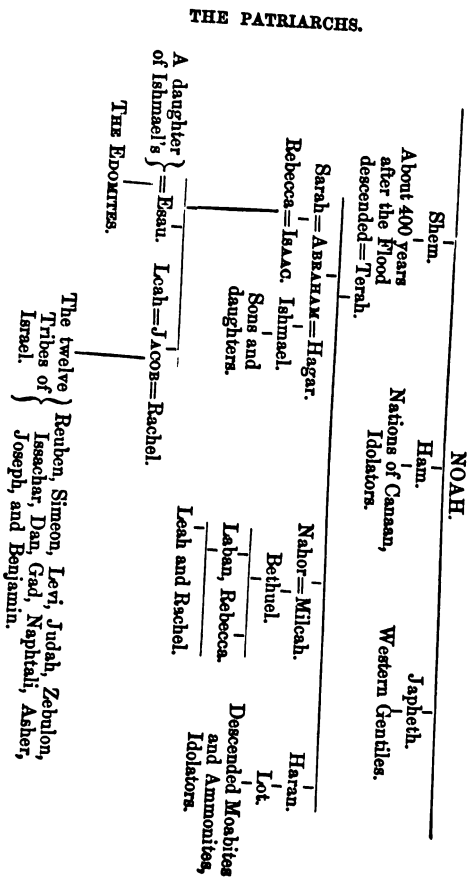
And they promised.

So Joseph died, and his body was embalmed and laid in a coffin.

These are the names of the sons of Jacob from whom the twelve tribes of Israel descended. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali ; and Joseph and Benjamin who were the two only children of Rachel, Jacob's best loved wife.

.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE PATRIARCHS.



THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES,
CALLED EXODUS.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE FIRST AND SECOND CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

THE Book of Exodus was written by Moses, and is so called because it relates the history of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. Exodus meaning departure.

It comprehends the history of about 145 years,* and relates the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, their wonderful deliverance, the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, and the building of the Tabernacle.

After the death of Joseph and all his brethren, their children and grandchildren continued to dwell in the land of Egypt, and they increased so much in number, that the land was full of them, and they became a very mighty people.

* Tomline.

About 120 years after the children of Israel came to Goshen, and sixty years after the death of Joseph, a king reigned in Egypt, who knew not Joseph, and he was afraid of the Israelites. He feared that they might join with his enemies and fight against him. So he determined to oppress them and keep them down; he caused them to work very hard for him, and to build cities for him; and he set task-masters over them.

But the worse they were treated, the more the Israelites increased in number, and the more afraid of them the Egyptians became.

Then Pharaoh determined upon a very cruel plan; he ordered that every Israelite boy should be thrown into the river Nile, as soon as he was born, but that the girl-babies should be allowed to live.

Now there was a man called Amram, of the family of Levi, and his wife's name was Jochebed, and she had a beautiful little baby-boy. She hid him for three months, and then she could hide him no longer, as he was becoming a big child. She was afraid that the cruel Egyptians would find him, and throw him into the river as they had done to so many poor little innocent infants; so she made a basket of bulrushes, and covered

it with clay and pitch to keep out the wet, and she laid her baby in it, and hid it amongst the tall, thick reeds that grew by the river's side. And her daughter stood afar off, to see what would become of the child.

Now Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and she saw the basket hidden amongst the reeds, and told one of her maids to fetch it. And when the princess opened the basket, there lay the beautiful baby, and the poor little creature wept.

And the princess was full of pity for it, and she said, "It must be one of the Hebrew children."

The Israelites were also called Hebrews, probably from Heber one of Abraham's forefathers.*

Now the sister of the babe saw all that happened, and she came up to Pharaoh's daughter, and said, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?"

And Pharaoh's daughter said, "Go."

So she went and called her mother to nurse her own baby. How clever of her to think of doing this; and how happy Jochebed must have

* Tomline.

felt when the princess said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

She little knew that she was giving the baby to one who would take care of it, better than any one else in the world—its own mother.

So Jochebed took the child and nursed him till he was grown, and then she took him back to the princess, who treated him as if he were her own son, and he was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, who were a very learned people. And the princess called him Moses, which means "drawn out," because she had drawn him out of the water.

And it came to pass, long after, when Moses was forty years old (Acts vii. 23), that he went to visit his countrymen the Hebrews, and he beheld how they were made to toil and labour. And he chanced to see an Egyptian about to kill an Hebrew. Then Moses resolved to save the life of his poor countryman, and looking round and seeing no one, he attacked the Egyptian and slew him, and hid the body in the sand.

The next day, Moses again went out, and saw two Hebrews fighting together; and he said to the one that was in the wrong, "Why dost thou smite thy fellow countryman?"

Then the man was very angry with Moses for interfering, and said, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Dost thou mean to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?"

And Moses was afraid, for he saw that it was known that he had killed the Egyptian. And when Pharaoh heard this thing, he tried to put Moses to death. But Moses escaped from the anger of Pharaoh, and fled to the land of Midian, a country lying to the east of Egypt.

The Midianites, or people of Midian, were descended from Abraham, as were the Hebrews, but not through his son Isaac; through another son, whose mother's name was Keturah, whom Abraham had married after Sarah's death.

And when Moses came to Midian, tired with his long journey, he sat down to rest, by the side of a well.

Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, had seven daughters, and whilst Moses was sitting at the well, they came to draw water for their cattle; but some shepherds, who also came to draw water, drove them away, and would not allow them to have any. Then Moses stood up and helped the sisters, for he could not bear to see any one illtreated, and he watered their flock, and they returned home.

Jethro was quite surprised to see them come back so early, for he knew how in general they had to wait till the last; and he said,

“How is it that ye are come so soon to-day?”

They said, “A man of Egypt delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew water for us, and watered the flocks.”

Then Jethro said, “But where is he? —Why is it that ye have left the man? Call him, that he may eat bread.”

So they fetched Moses, and he came, and continued to live with them; and Jethro gave him Zipporah his daughter to be his wife. And Zipporah and Moses had two sons; and Moses called the eldest Gershom, and the youngest Eliezer.

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE SECOND AND THIRD CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

B. C. 1491.

WHILE Moses was living in Midian, the king of Egypt died, but the Pharaoh who succeeded him on the throne, oppressed the Hebrews more than ever; and they cried and groaned by reason of their cruel bondage. And God heard their groaning, and he remembered his promise to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

About forty years after Moses fled from Egypt, he was keeping the flocks of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to pasture behind the desert, and came to the mountain of God, which is also called Horeb and Sinai, at the foot of which lies to this day a well watered, fertile, and beautiful valley.*

And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And Moses was greatly astonished, for, though the bush was in one blaze of fire, yet it was not burnt; and he said,

"I will turn now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned."

And the Lord saw that he turned to look, and God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said,

"Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here am I."

And the Lord said,

"Draw not nigh hither. Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

* Robinson. Bartlett.

And the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land, to a good land and a large, flowing with milk and honey. Come now, and I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

And Moses said, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

And the Lord said, "Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a sign unto thee that I have sent thee.—When thou shalt have brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."

And Moses said to God, "Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them, The God of your fathers hath sent me to you, and they shall ask me, What is his name?—what shall I say unto them?"

And God said unto Moses,

"*I am he who is.** Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel,—I AM hath sent me unto you.

"Go and gather together the elders of Israel,

* Douay Version.

and say to them, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying,—I have surely visited you, and have seen what is done to you in Egypt; and I have declared that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Then the Lord commanded Moses to go with the elders or chief of the Israelites to Pharaoh, to tell him, that the Lord the God of the Hebrews had met them, and to desire leave to take three days' journey into the wilderness, to sacrifice to the Lord their God.

The Lord told Moses that Pharaoh would not let them go until He had smitten Egypt with all his wonders, and after that Pharaoh would let them go; and they should all leave Egypt, but not empty-handed, for they should take from the Egyptians, jewels of gold, and jewels of silver, and raiment, or clothing.

But Moses was afraid that the Hebrews would not believe that the Lord had appeared unto him.

Then the Lord told him to cast a rod which he held in his hand upon the ground, and the rod was changed into a serpent, and Moses fled from it. The Lord said,

"Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail."

Moses did so, and it became again a rod in his hand.

And the Lord said furthermore,

"Put now thy hand into thy bosom."

And Moses put his hand into his bosom, and drew it out again, and behold it was turned as white as snow with the terrible disease of leprosy.

And the Lord said,

"Put thine hand into thy bosom again."

Moses did so, and when he took it out again the leprosy was cured, and the flesh the same as upon the other hand.

Then the Lord told him to show the Israelites the first sign, and if by that they would not believe that the Lord God of their fathers had appeared unto Moses, he was to show them the second sign of the leprosy, and if they still would not believe, he must take water out of the river Nile, and pour it upon the ground, and the water would immediately become blood.

Still Moses was afraid and unwilling to be the bearer of the Lord's message, and he made new excuses.

He said, "Oh, my Lord, I am not ready at speaking, neither before, nor since thou hast

spoken unto thy servant.—I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.”

And the Lord said unto him,

“Who hath made man’s mouth? or who maketh the deaf or the dumb, or the seeing or the blind?—Have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.”

It seems very strange that after the Lord had said this, Moses should still seem unwilling to be the Lord’s messenger; but he was so; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, and he said,

“Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee; and when he seeth thee he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. And thou shalt take this rod in thy hand wherewith thou shalt do signs.”

And the Lord left off speaking with Moses, and Moses returned to Jethro, and asked his leave to go into Egypt and see his relations; and

Jethro said, "Go in peace." And Moses took his wife and his two sons and set them upon an ass, and he took the rod in his hand, and returned to the land of Egypt.

And Aaron, sent by the Lord, came to meet Moses in the wilderness. And Aaron kissed Moses, and Moses told his brother all the words of the Lord, and of the wonderful signs.

Then Moses and Aaron went and called the elders of the children of Israel together, and delivered to them the message of the Lord, and showed them the signs. And the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON THE FIFTH, SIXTH, AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

THEN Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh and said unto him :

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness."

Then Pharaoh answered very insolently, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let

Israel go? I know not the Lord, and I will not let Israel go."

And Moses and Aaron said, "The God of the Hebrews hath met with us; let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he punish us with death."

Then Pharaoh was very angry, and said, "Why do ye, Moses and Aaron, hinder the people from their work? Get ye to your burthens!"

Then Pharaoh commanded the task-masters to work the people of Israel harder than ever. He ordered them to give no more straw for the brick-making, but to make the people gather it for themselves, wherever they could find it, and yet they should make as many bricks as before.

As the Hebrew overseers came forth from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron, who were standing in the way. They were very much discouraged by Pharaoh's order, they did not know what would become of them, and they began reproaching Moses and Aaron for having interfered and spoken to Pharaoh, for they said they were much worse off even than before, that Pharaoh hated them, and that he would slay them.

Upon hearing this, the faith of Moses began also to waver, and he said to the Lord, "Wherefore hast thou sent me, for since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people, neither hast thou delivered thy people at all."

Then the Lord spake unto Moses, and said,

"Now thou shalt see what I will do to Pharaoh, for with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land."

And the Lord called himself by a new name—by the name Jehovah, which means the faithful and unchangeable, a name which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had never heard, a name so sacred and holy that the Jews never dare to pronounce it. Furthermore, the Lord renewed again his promise to bring the children of Israel into the land of Canaan and to give it to them for a possession, as he had sworn to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

And the Lord said,

"I will take you to me for a people, and I will be your God, and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God which bringeth you out from the burthens of the Egyptians."

Then Moses told these comforting words to the Israelites. But they would not even listen

to him, for their spirit was broken with their cruel bondage.

And the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to go again before Pharaoh, and repeat to him his message; to take also the rod with them, and to show the wonders that the Lord worked by its means to the king.

At this time Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three.

And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord had commanded, and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his courtiers, and it became a serpent.

Then Pharaoh sent for his magicians, Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. iii. 8), two very clever jugglers. They too cast down their rods and they became serpents, but Aaron's rod swallowed up the magicians' rods, to show how much greater was the power of the Lord than that of the tricks of the jugglers.

Notwithstanding Pharaoh would not believe in the Lord, and he refused to let the people go.

And the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to go to Pharaoh the next morning as he stood by the river's side; again to demand leave for the people to go, in the name of the Lord; if he refused the river should be turned into blood, that he might know that the Lord was God.



And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded. Aaron stretched out his hand and struck the water of the Nile with his rod, and immediately the whole of the water of the deep, broad river, so famous for its delicious taste,* was changed into blood, in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants. And all the fish that were in the river floated dead upon the surface of the stinking and horrible liquid ; and there was no water throughout all the land of Egypt, for even the water that was in vessels of wood or stone in the houses of the Egyptians was turned into blood.

But the magicians managed to do the same by their juggleries or tricks, and so Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he turned from the river's side and went to his own house.

And the Egyptians dug about the river for water, for they could not drink of the water of the river.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ON THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AFTER seven days the Lord told Moses to go before Pharaoh a fourth time, and to declare

* Milman.

unto him, that if he would not let the people go, the whole land should be full of frogs.

And Aaron at the Lord's command stretched his hand over the river, the canals and the ponds, and frogs came forth in multitudes from the corrupted waters. The frogs came by thousands through the palace gates, into all the rooms, and upon the beds, not only of Pharaoh's house, but of all the houses of all the Egyptians; not an oven, not a kneading-trough, not a single place was free from these creatures.

They came in such numbers that they hopped upon the people themselves.

The magicians also made frogs to come, but to make them depart was beyond their power.

Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and he said, "Entreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people, and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord."

Moses asked Pharaoh when he should entreat the Lord to remove the frogs; and Pharaoh begged that it might be the next day.

And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh and besought the Lord to remove the plague of frogs. And the Lord did according unto the word of Moses, and the frogs died in the houses,



in the villages and the fields ; and the Egyptians collected them together in heaps, and the land stank with the dead frogs.

But when Pharaoh saw that the frogs were all gone, he hardened his heart as the Lord had said, and refused to let the people go.

Then the Lord commanded that Aaron should stretch forth the rod and smite the dust of the land that it might become lice through all the land of Egypt.

And Aaron did so, and all the dust was changed into these loathsome, crawling insects upon man and upon beast throughout all the land. It was impossible for the cleanest people to be free from them, not even the priests who washed four times a day, and who wore the whitest and finest of linen, so particular were they about cleanliness ;* everything was full of vermin.

And the magicians tried to bring forth lice by their tricks, but they could not !

Then said the magicians to Pharaoh, " This is the work of God ! "

But Pharaoh became more obstinate than ever, and still refused to let the people go.

And the Lord commanded Moses to rise up early in the morning, and to go down to the river, to meet Pharaoh, and to say unto him :

And the next day, all the asses and camels and horses, and oxen and sheep that were in the fields fell sick of a terrible disease, and they all died. The Egyptians kept cattle for the sake of their milk, or wool, or labour; they never killed any for food, because, as I have told you, they worshipped many animals as gods, such as the goat, the ram, the bull, and many others. And Pharaoh sent to inquire if any of the cattle of the Israelites had died; and behold there was not one dead.

Then Pharaoh hardened his heart again, and refused to let the people go.

And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron,

“Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it towards the heaven, in the sight of Pharaoh, and it shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast through all the land of Egypt.”

And Moses did so, and immediately dreadful sore boils broke out on the flesh of man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses, they were in such pain, being covered with boils, like all the other Egyptians.

Still Pharaoh would not let the people go, he was so obstinate, as the Lord had foretold.

Then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron again

before Pharaoh with a more severe message than before, reproaching him for his hardness of heart, and pride, and obstinacy, saying,

“As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people that thou wilt not let them go? Behold, to-morrow about this time, I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation of it, until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle and all that thou hast in the field. Every man or beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.”

He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and cattle flee for shelter to the houses; and he that feared not the word of the Lord, left his servants and cattle in the field.

You may perhaps not understand how there came to be still cattle left in the land of Egypt, when you read a few pages back of the cattle being destroyed by the murrain; you must remember that those cattle only that were in the pastures died; and that also, as the Hebrews had lost none of their cattle, it is not unlikely that the Egyptians had supplied themselves again from their flocks and herds.

And Moses stretched forth his hand towards heaven, by the commandment of the Lord; and the Lord sent a mighty storm of thunder and lightning and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground. And all the people and cattle that were out of doors, were killed by the enormous hail-stones, and the trees were broken to pieces, and the crops destroyed. Never before had such a terrible storm been known in Egypt, a country where even a shower of rain is very rare, the yearly overflowing of the Nile watering the land instead of rain.

Now when Pharaoh heard the awful sound of the loud, rolling thunder, and saw the flashing lightnings, and the hail-stones like balls of ice, falling thick from the dark, black clouds, and the fire running along the ground, he was terrified indeed, and he sent for Moses and Aaron, and said, "I have sinned this time!—The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Entreat the Lord, for it is enough, that there be no more mighty thundering and hail, and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer."

And Moses said, "As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest

know how that the earth is the Lord's. But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the Lord God."

And Moses went out of the city, and prayed unto the Lord, and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth.

And when Pharaoh saw that the storm had ceased, he and his servants hardened their hearts, and would not let the people go.

This awful storm happened in the month of March, when the barley was in ear, and the flax grown up ; both these crops were therefore destroyed. Egypt was famous for its fine linen, which is spun, you know, from flax ; and a drink was made from barley, which was much used by the common people.* The wheat and rye crops were not destroyed, as the seed had only just been put into the ground.

In the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwelt, there was neither thunder nor hail.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ON THE TENTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AND the Lord said unto Moses,

"Go in unto Pharaoh, for I have hardened

* Milman.

his heart and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs before him ; and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son and of thy son's son what things I have done in Egypt, that ye may know that I am the Lord."

Then Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh and said, "Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews—How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?—Let my people go, that they may serve me, or behold, to-morrow will I bring the locusts into thy country, and they shall cover the face of the earth so thickly that one shall not be able to see the ground, and they shall eat all that is escaped from the hail, and every tree which groweth out of the field ; and they shall fill thy house, and the houses of all the Egyptians, and neither thy fathers nor thy fathers' fathers shall have seen anything like them."

And Moses and Aaron turned, and went out from Pharaoh.

Then Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long shall this man be our ruin? Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Dost thou not know that Egypt is destroyed?"

Upon this, Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron again, and said to them, "Go, serve the Lord your God.—But who do you mean to take?"

And Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds, for we must hold a feast unto the Lord."

But Pharaoh wanted to keep the women and children and cattle as pledges, for then, he thought, the men would surely come back again. So he flew into a rage, and said he would only allow the men to go to serve the Lord, and he drove Moses and Aaron from his presence.

Then Moses at the command of the Lord stretched forth his rod over the land, and the Lord sent a strong east wind, which blew the rest of that day, and all through the night; and in the morning the locusts had come in such numbers, that the very air was darkened by them, and they covered the ground, and eat up every herb of the land, and every leaf from the trees which the hail had left; there did not remain one single blade of grass nor one green leaf through all the land of Egypt—the whole country became like a barren desert.

I dare say you have seen a grasshopper. The locust is very like a large grasshopper. It is about two and a half inches in length, and has wings like a dragon-fly, but much stronger, with which it makes a loud clacking noise in flight.

It has large round eyes, and is rather a fierce-looking creature, though it harms nothing but plants.

And when Pharaoh saw the desolation which the locusts had occasioned, he sent in haste for Moses and Aaron, confessed that he had sinned, and implored them to forgive him this once, and to entreat the Lord to remove the locusts.

And Moses entreated the Lord, and the Lord sent a mighty strong west wind, which blew all the locusts into the Red Sea,—not one single one was left in Egypt.

Then Pharaoh hardened his heart again, and refused to let the people go.

And the Lord said unto Moses,

“Stretch forth thy hand towards heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.”

And Moses did so, and for three days a black thick darkness settled over all the land of Egypt. No one could see, and no one dared stir from his place all those three terrible days, during which neither the sun, which the Egyptians worshipped as their chief god, nor the moon, nor the stars, showed one gleam of light ; but the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Pharaoh seems to have been more terrified by

this plague than by any of the former ones, for he sent for Moses and Aaron, and told them to take their little ones, and go and serve the Lord their God, only to leave behind them their flocks and herds.

You remember that all the cattle of Egypt had been destroyed by the murrain and the hail; this, no doubt, was the reason why Pharaoh was so anxious that the Hebrews should leave their flocks behind them, that he and his people might get possession of them.

And Moses said, "Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God, and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither."

But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go; and he said to Moses, "Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."

And Moses said, "Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.—Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land

of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast, that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel; and all these thy servants shall come down unto me, saying, Get thee out; and after that I will go out."

And Moses, when he had said these words, went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

CHAPTER XXX.

ON THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

B. C. 1635.

THEN the Lord commanded Moses to order every family of the Israelites to take each a lamb without blemish, and to kill it that evening; and to take of the blood, and to strike it upon the door-posts of their houses. And the flesh of those lambs was to be roasted, and eaten with

bitter herbs and unleavened bread, baked in haste. Nothing of the lamb was to be left till morning; that which they could not eat was to be burnt with fire. And thus were the people to eat it—with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hands. They were to eat it in haste. It was the Lord's Passover.

For the Lord said,

"I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment. I am the Lord.

"And the blood shall be for you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will *pass over* you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy, when I smite the land of Egypt."

The Lord commanded that the feast of the Passover should be kept by the Israelites for ever, in remembrance of their delivery from slavery in Egypt. It was to be kept in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month Abib, which answers to our month of March.

It was this very feast of the Passover which our Lord Jesus Christ eat with His disciples the evening before He was betrayed. It is the feast

of the Passover which the Jews, now scattered over every country in the world, still keep at the appointed time, and in the appointed manner : and it is in the stead of this Passover that our Lord has commanded Christians to eat the Holy Sacrament, in remembrance of His death, who is the firstborn of all creation, and in remembrance of the deliverance from the slavery of sin, worse than the slavery of Egypt, of all those who believe and obey Him.

And when Moses commanded these things to the people, they bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron.

And at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon ; and all the firstborn of cattle.

And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Once in a country, not very far from Egypt, we were awakened in the dead of the night, by piercing and terrible shrieks ; so loud and so

almost frantic they sounded, that we thought at first that some one was being violently beaten, or even murdered, till we heard the sounds change into moanings and wailings of the deepest distress. These shrieks and wailings continued till the morning, when we were told that a woman had died in the next street, and that the sounds which had so frightened us, were the lamentations of her relations for her loss. This may give you some idea of what that "great cry" must have been in Egypt, that terrible night of the 14th of Abib; when from every house in those large cities, from every cottage in that populous country, this wailing for the dead was heard; when in all the temples, the animals that they worshipped also lay dead. For these dumb, though living idols, were always chosen from among the firstborn of beasts.*

Well might Pharaoh send to Moses and Aaron by night and tell them to "rise up, and take their little ones and their cattle and their herds, and to be gone from him and his people." And all the Egyptians were urgent to hasten the Israelites away, for they said, "We be all dead men."

And the Israelites took their dough before it was leavened, bound up in their clothes upon

* Milman.

their shoulders ; and as the Lord had commanded them, they asked jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing of the Egyptians, and the Lord gave them favour in the sight of the Egyptians, and they gave them whatever they required. So they at last received what was their due, for all the years during which they had toiled without payment for the people of Egypt.

And Moses took the bones of Joseph, for Joseph had, before his death, made the children of Israel swear that they would not leave his bones behind, when the Lord should lead his people out of Egypt. And the children of Israel assembled, and set off from Rameses, and journeyed to Succoth. They were about six hundred thousand on foot besides children, and large flocks and herds.

Now from the death of Joseph to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, was one hundred and forty-four years.*

And God led the people from Succoth to Etham, by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. The Lord would not allow the people to travel to Canaan, through the country of the Philistines, though it was much the shortest way, for the Philistines were a fierce and warlike people,

* Compare Exodus xii. 41 with Galatians iii. 17.

and the Israelites might have been afraid of them, and have returned to Egypt.

And the people encamped at Etham. In the day time the Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way which they were to go ; and in the night-time He went before them in a pillar of fire, to give them light, that they might travel by night, as well as by day.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ON THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AND the Lord commanded the people to turn to the south, and to encamp in a place called Piha-hiroth, on the north-western shore of the Red Sea. And the Lord told Moses, that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, and he should pursue the Israelites ; and the Lord said, He would cause His name to be honoured, that all the Egyptians might know that He was the Lord.

And so it was ; for no sooner had the Israelites quitted Egypt, than the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against them, and they repented that they had let them go ; and Pharaoh determined to pursue them with an army. So he made ready his war chariots, and his soldiers,

and six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains and horsemen, and pursued after the Israelites, with whom he came in sight, as they were setting up their tents by the sea-side.

Then when the Israelites saw this large army of the Egyptians pursuing after them, they were terribly afraid, for there seemed no way of escape ; on their left and in front the sea, on their right a mountain, and behind them the rapidly advancing host of the Egyptians,* and they cried out unto the Lord, and they said to Moses, " Were there no graves in Egypt, that thou hast brought us out to die in the wilderness ? It would be better for us to serve the Egyptians than to be killed in the wilderness ! "

And Moses said, " Fear not ! Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show unto you to-day. For the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see again no more for ever. The Lord will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. "

And the Lord said unto Moses,

" Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward. But thou, lift up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it, that the

* Robinson.

children of Israel may go on dry land through the midst of the sea."

And the angel of God who went before the Israelites removed and went behind them ; and the pillar came between the Israelites and the Egyptians ; and to the Egyptians it was a cloud and darkness, but it gave light to the Israelites so that they came not near each other all the night.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused a strong east wind to blow, and a dry passage was made through the midst of the sea, and the waters stood up on the right hand and on the left, like a wall, and the children of Israel went down from the shore into the bed of the sea, and crossed over the sea upon dry ground.

Then Pharaoh with his chariots and horsemen pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, along the dry passage.

And early before dawn, the Lord looked unto the Egyptian army, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and the Egyptians were terrified. And the Lord took off their chariot-wheels and made them go heavily ; so that the Egyptians said, " Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them."

And the Lord said to Moses,

“Stretch out thy hand over the sea, and the waters shall come again upon the Egyptians, and upon their chariots and upon their horsemen.”

And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its place when the dawn appeared. And as the Egyptians in terror and confusion were rushing back to the shore they had left, the sea met them in its strength, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh. They were all drowned, they sank like “lead in the mighty waters,” not one got safe to land.

But the children of Israel went upon dry ground through the midst of the sea, and reached the opposite shore, and the waters were a wall unto them upon their right hand and upon their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.

And the Israelites saw the dead bodies of the Egyptians strewn upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and trusted in the Lord, and in Moses his servant.

And Moses and the children of Israel sang a beautiful song of thanksgiving unto the Lord,

which you will find in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus ; and Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, took a timbrel, an instrument of music, in her hand ; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam sang to them :

“Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.”

The Israelites in all probability crossed the Red Sea near the place where Suez now stands, where the sea is three or four miles from shore to shore.*

CHAPTER XXXII.

ON THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

AND Moses and the children of Israel continued their journey along the eastern coast of the Red Sea, in the wilderness of Shur. A wilderness is a wild country, without towns or villages. The wilderness of Shur is a scorching plain of sand and gravel,† bounded by white limestone hills: and for three days the Israelites journeyed, found no water. They were nearly perished.

* Niebuhr. Robinson

† Bartlett.

with thirst, winding among the sultry hills to which the plain presently changed, when they came to a well. Then they all rushed to drink, but the water was so bitter it was not fit to use.

Then the people murmured against Moses, and cried out in their disappointment and anger, "What are we to drink?"

And Moses cried unto the Lord for help, and the Lord showed him a tree to cast into the water. And then the waters were healed, and made sweet for a time.

This well they called "Marah," which means "bitterness."

This well is still in existence: the water is extremely bitter. The Arabs of the present day consider it the worst water of all the neighbourhood, and will not drink it unless compelled by great necessity.*

And the Lord said to the children of Israel, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these evils upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee."

* Robinson. Bartlett.

Elim was the name of the next place where the Israelites stopped, not far from the eastern shore of the Red Sea. Elim was a pleasant resting-place, for there were twelve wells of water there, and seventy palm trees. Wherever there is water in the wilderness, there also grows grass, and trees, and plants. These pleasant spots are called "Oases." Travellers still find this oasis of Elim, with its pleasant thickets of palm-trees, and other shrubs, growing by a small pool of clear water, the birds hopping merrily about.* Here the people of Israel rested a month, then—always led by the pillar of cloud—they set off again upon their journey, through narrow, sandy passes, winding amongst lofty, scorching rocks of limestone, and reached the wilderness of Sin, a desert place extending along the shore of the Red Sea. Here they arrived upon the fifteenth day of the second month after coming out of the land of Egypt.

And the people had nothing to eat, and they began again to murmur against Moses and Aaron.

"Would to God," they said, most ungratefully, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the

* Bartlett.



pots full of meat, and had plenty of bread to eat !
Ye have brought us forth into the wilderness to
kill us all with hunger !”

Thus they forgot all the mercies that the Lord
had showed them, and railed against Moses and
against Aaron, as if it had been by their com-
mand that they had left Egypt.

Then said the Lord unto Moses,

“ Behold I will rain bread from heaven for
you, and the people shall go out to gather a
certain quantity every day ; and on the sixth
day they shall bring in and prepare twice as
much as they gather daily.”

And Moses and Aaron said to all the people,
“ At even ye shall know that the Lord hath
brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the
morning ye shall see the glory of the Lord. For
he heareth your murmurings against the Lord.
For what are we, that ye murmur against us ?
Your murmurings are not against us, but against
the Lord.”

Then Moses commanded Aaron to order all
the people to assemble before the Lord ; and
whilst Aaron was yet giving the order to all the
children of Israel, they looked towards the wil-
derness, and behold, the glory of the Lord
appeared in the pillar of cloud.

And the Lord spake to Moses, saying,

"I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel.—Speak to them, saying, In the evening ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread, and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God."

And so it came to pass. That very evening such immense flights of quails came, that the ground about the tents was covered with them. Quails are a kind of bird something like a partridge, but much smaller, fat, and good to eat. They fly in flocks, but so large a flock as this had never been seen before.

So the murmuring Israelites had plenty of flesh to eat that night.

In the morning, the dew was lying round about the camp; and when the dew was dry, there lay upon the face of the wilderness a small, scaly thing, white, like the hoar frost.

And when the Israelites saw it, they said one to another, "What is this?"

And Moses said to them, "This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."

And Moses told them that the Lord commanded them to gather no more than an omer for each person. An omer is about five pints. And the children of Israel did so; and when

they eat of it, they found it tasted sweet, like cakes made with honey: and they called it "manna," which means, "what is it?" for they knew not what it was.

Moses likewise ordered them to keep none of the manna over night. But some of the people were disobedient, and kept some of the manna till next morning; and they found that it smelt badly, and was full of worms; and Moses was angry with them. Thus every person gathered each morning enough to last his family through the day, and when the sun became hot, it melted from off the ground.

And on the sixth day the people gathered twice as much as usual, and the rulers came and told Moses. But Moses said the people were right in doing so, for that the next day was the Sabbath, or holy rest of the Lord.

And the manna which the people put by for the Sabbath did not get bad.

And Moses told them always to gather double quantities on the sixth day, for that on the Sabbath they would find none upon the ground.

And so it was; for some of the people went to gather manna upon the Sabbath morning, and they found none.

So the people kept the Sabbath on the seventh day.

And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a vessel, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord to be kept always."

And Aaron did as the Lord commanded Moses, in order that all the descendants of the children of Israel might see the bread, with which the Lord had fed their fathers in the wilderness.

And the children of Israel eat manna for forty years, till they came to a land inhabited. They eat manna till they came to the borders of the land of Canaan. They ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, or baked it in pans, and made cakes of it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ON THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

AND the people left the desert plain of Sin, and entered a wild, desolate, mountainous country, travelling through long, narrow winding ravines, with tremendous walls of rocks, towering on each side, of all colours, red, black, brown, white and yellow, glaring in the scorching sun ; no living creature or plant was to be seen,

except here and there a solitary acacia tree with its long sharp thorns.* And they came to Rephidim, near the mountains of Horeb, and here they found no water. And the people murmured again, and said to Moses, "Give us water that we may drink. Wherefore have ye brought us up from Egypt, to kill us, and our children and cattle, with thirst?"

And the people were so furious with thirst, after their journeying in the sultry, rocky wilderness, that they again forgot all the mercies that the Lord had shown them, and were ready to stone Moses, that is, to throw stones at him till he was killed.

And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, "What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me."

Then the Lord commanded Moses to take the rod in his hand, and to go with some of the elders, or chiefs of the Israelites, and to smite the rock in Horeb, and water should come out of the rock for the people to drink. And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.

At Rephidim the Israelites were attacked by bands of the fierce and wandering Amalekites.

Now there was among the Israelites, a young

* Bartlett.



And Moses did so in the sight of the Elders of
Israel.—P. 151.

7

man called Joshua, and his father's name was Nun. Joshua served and loved Moses, and was righteous and courageous. Moses (Numb. xiii. 16) gave him the name of Joshua, which is the same name as Jesus; both names meaning "Saviour."

And Moses commanded Joshua to choose brave men, and fight the Amalekites the next day, and said that he would stand upon the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand.

So Joshua did as Moses said, and fought with the Amalekites, and Moses and Aaron and Hur went up to the top of a rock. And it came to pass, that when Moses held up the rod, the Israelites had the victory, but when he dropped his hand with the rod, the Amalekites had the victory; and Moses' arm grew so tired, that at last he could hold it up no longer. Then Aaron and Hur got a stone for Moses to sit upon, and one supported one of Moses' hands, and the other the other hand, and thus his two hands were held up till the sun set. And Joshua and the Israelites quite defeated the Amalekites.

Now Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, heard in Midian, in which neighbourhood the Israelites were now arrived, all that the Lord had done for the people of Israel, and how He had brought

them out of Egypt, and he came with Zipporah, his daughter, Moses' wife, and her two sons Gershom and Eliezer, to see Moses in the wilderness of Horeb. And Moses went out to meet Jethro, and bowed himself before his father-in-law with much respect ; and they kissed each other, and asked each other of their welfare. Then Moses took them into his tent.

And Moses told Jethro all that the Lord had done unto the Egyptians, and all that had happened unto the Israelites on their journey, and how the Lord had constantly delivered them out of all their troubles.

And Jethro rejoiced, and said, "Blessed be the Lord who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians." And Jethro offered a sacrifice to the Lord ; and Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

The next morning, Moses sat to judge the people as usual. And the people continued coming to him for judgment from the morning till the evening ; and he told them what was the law of the Lord, in all their affairs and disputes.

But Jethro said this work would be too hard for Moses, and would wear him quite out ; and he advised Moses to choose from among the

Israelites, some wise and prudent men to judge the people in all small matters, and to give orders that only the important matters should be brought before him.

“If thou shalt do this thing,” Jethro said, “and God command thee to do it, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people also shall be contented.”

So Moses chose clever men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, and they judged the people at all seasons in the small matters ; but the hard causes they brought to Moses.

And Moses let his father-in-law depart, and Jethro went back to his own country.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ON THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

IN the third month after their departure from Egypt, the Israelites removed from Rephidim, after resting there some days, and came to the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped at the foot of the mountain of God, that very mountain, you remember, where the Lord had appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, when he was

living with Jethro in Midian, and where the Lord had said that his people should serve him, after that he had delivered them out of Egypt.

The Israelites pitched their tents, most probably, in the open plain, about two miles long, but less than a mile in breadth, enclosed by dark, lofty, barren mountains, which lies at the foot of mount Sinai, in the valley which opens into it. At the foot of mount Sinai "lies a fine broad plain, enclosed by rugged and venerable mountains of dark granite, stern, naked, splintered peaks of indescribable grandeur.* Mount Sinai itself lifts its steep and awful crags to the clouds. It is from twelve to fifteen hundred feet high, and rises "like a wall from the plain, so that one can approach quite to the foot and touch the mount."†

And Moses went up into the mountain unto God ; and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, and commanded him to tell the people of Israel, that if they would keep the laws of the Lord, they should be unto Him a holy nation, and a peculiar treasure above all people.

And Moses went back to the people, and told the elders these words of the Lord. And all the people answered together, and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do."

* Robinson.

† Ibid.

Then Moses returned to the mount, and said these words of the people unto the Lord.

And the Lord said unto Moses :

“ Lo ! I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.”

And the Lord told Moses to command the people to keep themselves holy, and to wash their clothes, and to prepare themselves solemnly ; for that in the third day, the Lord would come down upon mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

Moreover, the Lord commanded Moses to fence the holy mountain round about, that none of the people might go upon it, or touch it. Whosoever should presume even to touch it, whether man or beast, should surely be put to death. But when the trumpet sounded long, they might come near the mount, and stand outside the fence.

And Moses went down from the mountain, and gave these commands to the people.

And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount ; and voice of the trumpet sounded exceeding low that all the people in the camp trembled.



And Moses brought forth the people from the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mount, outside the fence.

And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord came down upon it in fire. It was not a bush alone this second time that was in flame, but the whole mountain. And the smoke went up, as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain shook greatly.

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and louder and louder, it was so terrible that Moses said, "I fear and tremble exceedingly!" (Heb. xii. 21.)

And God spoke to Moses by a voice.

Then the rulers of the Israelites were terribly frightened, and they said to Moses, "Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now, therefore, why should we die?—for this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die, for who hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?"

And they entreated Moses to go near, and hear for them all that the Lord should say. (Deut. v. 24.)

And the Lord again called Moses to the top of the mount, and Moses went up.

And the Lord commanded Moses to go down, and return again with Aaron ; but to charge strictly the people not to break through the bounds that were set round the mount.

So Moses went down to the people, and gave them that charge. And then the voice of the Lord God gave those commandments, which are called the Ten Commandments, in the hearing of all the people.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ON THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AND God spake all these words, saying,

“ I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

“ Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

“ Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth ; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children.

the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

“Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates ; for in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

“Thou shalt not kill.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.

“Thou shalt not steal.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his

man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is his."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THESE ten commandments, the Lord God spake with His voice, in the hearing of all the people of Israel, as they stood outside the bounds, at the foot of the holy mountain.

You may think perhaps, dear children, that these commandments were not meant for you ; that you are too young almost to understand them, and certainly could not break them. But wait a little, and let us think.

The first and second commandments forbid the worshipping of any other god than the Lord God.

"Oh," I think I can hear you say, "I am quite sure I should never wish to do anything so foolish or wicked as to worship idols."

Certainly you would not. There is no danger of a Christian child even thinking of such a thing.

But we are forbidden to serve anything *before* God, to love anything *more* than God.

And is it not serving and loving yourselves more than God whenever you *do not do that*

which you OUGHT to do, in order that you may *do that which you LIKE to do*?

Whenever you allow pride or passion, or ill humour or idleness to have the *mastery* over you, then you *serve them* and not God, for you know such bad feelings please him ill. Yet, instead of fighting against them—for to every child amongst you, some of these feelings will sometimes come—you almost take a pleasure in them, and like to be naughty! And this, do not you think, is very like making naughtiness your master instead of goodness? The Lord your God is all goodness, and “you cannot serve two masters.” (Matt. vi. 24.)

Whenever, therefore, we love pleasing ourselves more than doing what is right, we *serve ourselves before* God; we make an *idol* of our own pleasure.

Secondly, whenever you speak the Holy name of God carelessly, or in play, and not with that respect and gravity without which that holy word should never pass your lips, “you take the name of the Lord in vain.”

The Jews never even spoke the word “Jehovah,” so great was their reverence for that sacred name; and shall Christian children be less reverent than they?

And, my dear children, when you kneel to pray, and speak words with your lips, with which your thoughts have no company, while they wander from one thing to another, and you do not even *try* to remember in "whose presence you are," is not this "taking the name of the Lord your God in vain?"

Of the fourth commandment it is not necessary that I should say much; your own parents will tell you what you may do, and what you may not do, on the day of "holy rest:" but there is one thing you may do of yourselves, and that is, to give as little trouble as possible, that it may be a "day of rest" to those who have the care of you.

You must "honour your father and mother" by obeying them, by minding what they teach you, by behaving respectfully towards them, by doing nothing when they are out of sight which you would not like to do when they were present.

Certainly you would not "*kill*" any one, as is forbidden in the sixth commandment. But our Lord tells us that "whosoever is angry without a cause," whosoever calls people by bad names, breaks this commandment. (Matt. v. 21, 22.)

Remember this well, dear children.

To take anything that is not yours, I cannot believe you would ever think of doing.

Something very like bearing false witness is more often and easily done. Though you may not actually *accuse* any one falsely, by *saying* they have done that which they have not done, yet if you allow any one to bear the blame of any fault or misfortune of your own, for fear of being blamed yourself, this is very like bearing false witness.

But I hope there are very few of you indeed who would do so cowardly and wrong a thing, as to let an innocent person suffer for any fault of yours.

To *covet* is to earnestly long for. We are forbidden to long earnestly for other people's things. It is the first step to stealing, and leads to envy and many other sad faults.

Thus you see, dear children, that it is in your power to break the meaning of every commandment, and that so easily, that hardly a day can pass without your sinning against one or the other. Of how much, then, do you need to be forgiven at the end of every single day? Remember this, and do not only *say*, but *pray from your hearts*, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH TO THE THIRTY-SECOND
CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

AND Moses wrote all the commandments of the Lord, for the Lord gave many more beside the ten, but it is not necessary that you should know them, as they were only given for the Jews. And Moses read them in the hearing of all the people the next morning; and all the people answered with one voice, "All the words which the Lord hath said, we will do."

And Moses sent young men to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings to the Lord.

And then Moses and Aaron, and Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron's sons, with seventy of the elders of Israel, went up Mount Sinai by the commandment of the Lord.

And they saw the presence of the God of Israel (John i. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16; Deut. iv. 15); and beneath, as it were a paved work of sapphire stone as clear as heaven. And they did eat and drink.

And the Lord said unto Moses:

"Come up into the mount, and be there. And I will give thee tables of stone, and a law and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them."

And Moses told the elders to wait till he came again, and he said that Aaron and Hur were to judge the people while he was away. And he took Joshua with him, and went up still higher into the mountain; and a cloud covered it.

For six days the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire upon the top of the mount, in the eyes of the people of Israel.

And the seventh day, the Lord called unto Moses, out of the midst of the cloud, and Moses went into the midst of the cloud; and he remained in the mount forty days and forty nights.

And the Lord gave unto Moses directions how to make and adorn a tabernacle, or tent for the worship of the Lord. And the Lord named Aaron and his four sons to minister unto Him as priests in the holy service of the tabernacle. The Lord directed the manner of the sacrifices and the vestments of the priests. These and many other directions the Lord gave unto Moses. And He chose two men, whose names were Bezaleel and Aholiab to cut the stones, and carve the timber, and work in all manner of workmanship for the tabernacle.

And the Lord gave unto Moses, when He had

made an end of communing with him, two tables of stone written with the finger of God.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ON THE THIRTY-SECOND CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

Now all the people of Israel waited for Moses, encamped at the foot of the mountain. And when day after day passed, and still Moses came not, they began to think that he was lost, and would never come back; and they grew tired of waiting; and though not more than a month and a half had passed since they had seen the awful presence of the Lord upon the mount, and had been terrified with the voice of His word, they seemed to have forgotten all! And in their mad and wicked impatience they crowded about Aaron, and furiously asked him to make them gods to go before them; "for, as for this Moses, who brought us up out of the land of Egypt," said they, "we know not what is become of him!"

And Aaron was so foolish and cowardly as to do as they desired. He told them to bring him all their golden earrings; and he melted them together, and he made of the gold the i



a calf. And when they saw it, the people cried out, "These be thy gods, O Israel! which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." You remember the chief idol of the Egyptians, called Apis, was a bull.

And Aaron built an altar before the image, and proclaimed, "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord."

And early the next morning the people rose up, and offered sacrifices to the idol, and spent the day in feasting and merriment. Thus did they break the first of the commandments which they had promised so solemnly to keep for ever.

Then said the Lord unto Moses:

"Go—get thee down—for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them, they have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed unto it, and said, 'These be thy gods which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.'

"I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore, let me alone, that my anger may grow hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great nation."

And Moses besought the Lord his God to pardon his people, and to remember the promises which he had made to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

And the Lord is so full of long-suffering and mercy, that He turned from the evil which He thought to do unto His people.

And Moses went down from the mount, holding the two tables of stone; they were written on both sides, and the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp."

And Moses said, "It is not the shout for mastery, nor the cry of those that are overcome. The noise of them that sing, do I hear."

And when he came near to the camp, and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger grew hot; and he cast the tables out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount. The people were indeed unworthy even to look upon them!

And Moses seized the calf and burnt it to powder, and mixed the powder with water and made the people drink it.



turned to Aaron, and reproached him severely for bringing so great a sin upon the people. And Aaron tried in vain to excuse his wickedness.

Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and cried, "Whosoever is on the Lord's side, let him come to me!"

And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves about him.

And Moses said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out through the camp, from gate to gate, and slay every man his companion, and every man his neighbour."

And the Levites obeyed Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

And on the morrow, Moses said unto the people, "Ye have sinned a great sin : and now I will go up unto the Lord, peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin."

And Moses returned unto the Lord, and offered himself for an atonement saying, "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin ; and if not—blot me I pray thee out of Thy book which Thou hast written."



But the Lord said unto Moses,
"Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will
I blot out of my book."

"Therefore go now, lead the people into the
place which I have spoken unto thee. Behold,
mine angel shall go before thee. Nevertheless
I will visit their sin upon them."

And the Lord plagued the people because
of the calf which Aaron had made.

Thus it did not please the Lord to punish
Moses for the sin of the people. Moses, though
he offered himself so generously to be even
blotted out of the book of the Lord, if that
dreadful punishment might obtain their pardon,
that is, be the atonement for their sin, was
refused. We are happily able to atone for our
faults to one another very often ; for instance,
by restoring what we have taken away unjustly ;
by begging for pardon when we have offended,
by giving something in exchange for what we
have destroyed.

But no man can atone to God for the sin of
another, nor even for his own sin ; for, "what
can a man give in exchange for his soul ?" It
is the Son of God, Jesus Christ the righteous,
who was delivered for our offences, by whom
alone we can receive the atonement or pardon.

"He died for the ungodly." "God so loved us," that He allowed it ; and through Him, we are saved from that "eternal death which passed upon all men, for that all men have sinned." (Rom. iv. 25 ; v. 11 ; vi. 8, 12.)

Should we not indeed then love the Lord, who has done this great thing for us ? Can we be so ungrateful as to have cold, dull hearts for Him, who hath showered his benefits upon us ? Oh no, my children, I think if you consider in the least, what He has done for us, you cannot help loving Him, and "If you love me," saith our Lord, "keep my commandments, and this is my commandment, that ye love one another," for "he who does not love his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?" (John xiv. 15 ; xv. 12 ; and 1 John iv. 20.)

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON THE THIRTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AND the Lord commanded Moses to tell the people that He would consume them in a moment, for they were a stiff-necked people ; and the Lord commanded them to put off their ornaments, that He might know what to do unto them.

Then the people mourned when they heard these evil tidings. And in sign of mourning repentance they took off all their ornaments.

And Moses went into the tabernacle, which he had removed far from the camp, and all the people stood at their tent doors, looking after Moses till he had gone into the tabernacle.

You will understand that this was not the tabernacle which the Lord had commanded should be made, and which was not yet begun. It was the tent which Moses had set apart for the service of the Lord, till the great tabernacle should be ready.

And as Moses entered into the tabernacle, all the people saw the cloudy pillar descend, and stand at the door ; and they all rose up and worshipped.

And the Lord spake to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend.

And Moses entreated the Lord to let His presence still go with the people.

And the Lord said unto Moses,

"I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken, for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name."

And Moses said, "I beseech thee, show me Thy glory."

And the Lord said unto Moses that He would make all his goodness pass before him ; but that Moses could not see His face, for no man can see Him, and live.

And the Lord said,

“Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts ; but my face shall not be seen.

“Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first : and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.

“And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount ; neither let the flocks and herds feed before that mount.”

And when the Lord had done speaking with Moses in the tabernacle, Moses turned again unto the camp ; but his young servant Joshua departed not out of the tabernacle.

CHAPTER XL.

ON THE THIRTY-FOURTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

AND Moses hewed two tables of stone like the first ; and he took them in his hand, and went early in the morning to Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him.

And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed,

“The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ; and that will by no means clear the guilty ; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the fourth generation.”

And Moses made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped.

And Moses remained again forty days and forty nights with the Lord upon the mountain, and did neither eat nor drink.

And the Lord communed with Moses. He promised to drive out all the wicked nations that dwelt in Canaan, from before the people of Israel. And the Lord forbade the Israelites to

make any peace or agreement with those wicked idolators, and he commanded them to destroy their altars and their images, and to cut down the groves where they worshipped those idols, lest they should be enticed to follow their ways, and sacrifice to their gods, and teach their children to do the same.

Also the Lord gave commandment concerning the Passover and other feasts. Three times in a year, all the men and boys of Israel were to appear before the Lord, in the place where He should choose His tabernacle to dwell, when they reached the promised land. And the Lord wrote again the ten commandments upon the two tables of stone which Moses had made.

And when, at the end of forty days and nights, Moses came down from the mountain, with the tables in his hand, the skin of his face shone so bright that Aaron and all the children of Israel were afraid to come near him, till Moses called them; and he put a veil over his face while he told unto them all the commandments which the Lord had given unto him in Mount Sinai.

But when Moses went into the tabernacle before the Lord, to speak with the Lord, he took the veil off; and when he came out of the tabernacle, he put the veil upon his face again.

CHAPTER XLI.

ON THE THIRTY-FIFTH CHAPTER OF EXODUS
TO THE END.

AND Moses assembled all the Israelites, and said unto them : " This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded ; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring as an offering unto the Lord, gold, and silver, and brass ; and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair ; and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins and shittim wood.* And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, and precious stones. And every wise-hearted among you shall come and make all that the Lord hath commanded."

And all the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.

You remember how, before they had left Egypt, the Egyptians had given to the Israelites gold and silver, and jewels and raiment, as much as they required ; there was therefore an abundance of those precious things in the camp, and some of the valleys about Sinai abounded in

* Black acacia.

acacia trees, so that there was no want of wood for the building of the tabernacle.

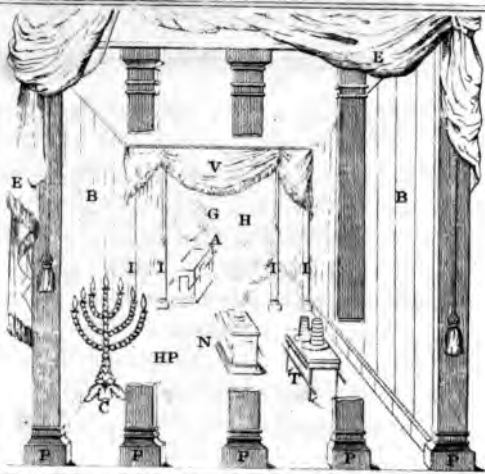
And now both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted came, and brought bracelets and earrings, and rings and tablets, all jewels of gold ; and fine linen and wool, and silver, and brass, and wood, for an offering to the Lord, for the work of the tabernacle.

And all the women that were wise-hearted set to work, and span blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and brought them also.

And the rulers brought precious stones and spices, and oils.

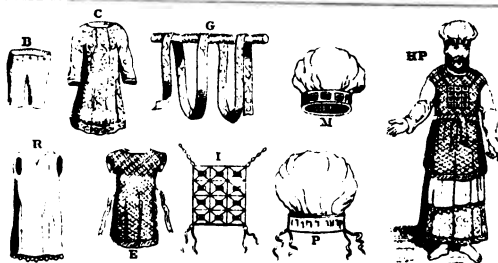
And Moses told the people that the Lord had appointed Bezaleel and Aholiab to do all the skilful work for the tabernacle ; such as cutting the stones and carving the wood, and inventing beautiful patterns for embroidery, and making the ornaments in gold and silver and precious stones, for the Lord had filled them with wisdom of heart.

The people brought such quantities of all the precious things needed for the tabernacle, that the workmen went to Moses at last and told him that they had more than enough to make all that was commanded.



H. The most Holy Place. A. The Ark. G. The Cloud of Glory. I. *See*. Four Pillars on which V the Vail is hung dividing the Holy Place from the most Holy. HP. The Holy Place. N. Altar of Incense. C. Candelabrum. T. Table of Show Bread. B B. Boards of the Tabernacle. P. Five Pillars on which the curtains hang at the entrance of the Tabernacle. E. The

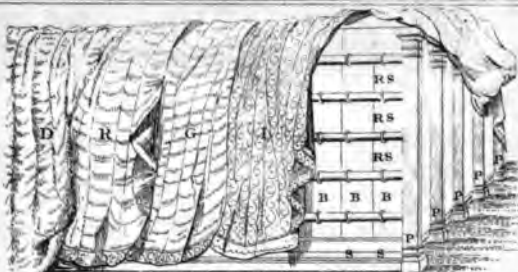
THE INSIDE OF THE TABERNACLE WITH IT HOLY VESSELS.



B. Linen Breeches for the Priests. C. Embroidered Linen Coat. R. Robe of Ephod all Blue. G. Girdle of the Coat. E. Ephod & Girdle. I. Breastplate & Jewels. M. Linen Mitre. P. Golden Plate on Mitre. HP. High Priest full dress.

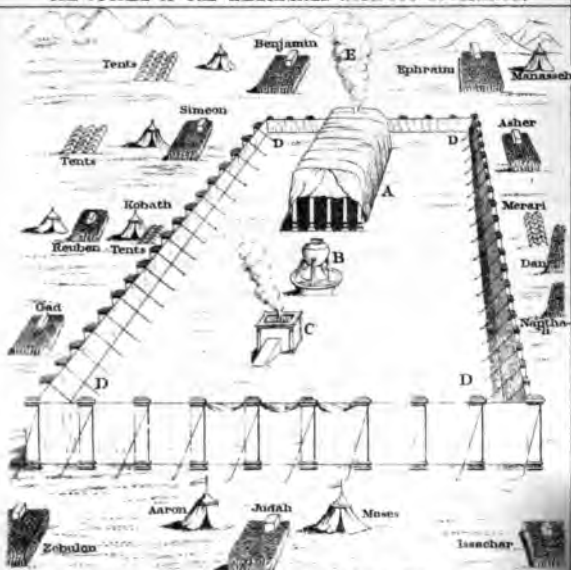
Engraved by Becker & Sons.

London G. Row



P. The Five Pillars at the entrance. B. The Boards. S. The Silver Sockets. RS. Rings & Staves or Burs. L. The under covering of Fine Linnen Curtains. G. Curtains of goats Hair. H. Covering of Rums Skins. D. of Badger Skins.

THE OUTSIDE OF THE TABERNACLE WITH ITS COVERINGS.



A. The Tabernacle. B. The Laver. C. The Altar of Burnt offering. D. The Court. E. The Cloud of Glory.

THE TABERNACLE WITH THE COURT & CAMP.



So Moses caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp : "Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the service of the sanctuary."

So the people were restrained from bringing any more, and the workmen began building the tabernacle.

The tabernacle was made of boards of shittim wood, covered with gold. It was fifty-two feet long and seventeen and a half wide, and the same in height. These boards were neither nailed nor glued together. In order that the tabernacle might be easily taken to pieces when the camp removed, they were joined one to another by hooks and tenons of silver, and held firm by wooden bars overlaid with gold, passing through golden rings fixed into the boards. Five pillars at the entrance to the tabernacle supported a rod, to which was hung a beautiful embroidered curtain, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

The tabernacle was divided into two unequal parts, by another row of four pillars made of wood, covered with gold ; and from these pillars hung another curtain of the same colours, beautifully embroidered with winged angels called cherubims. The first of these two parts was called the Holy Place. It was hung round with



beautifully embroidered curtains, and in it was placed the table of shittim wood, overlaid with fine gold, with a golden crown round the edge. Upon this table, called the Table of Shewbread, fresh loaves of bread were placed by the priests every Sabbath to stand before the Lord. There stood also the golden altar, upon which to burn sweet incense, and the splendid golden lamp with seven branches, adorned with golden flowers and almonds, which was always kept burning to give light within the tabernacle, to which there were no windows.

The second division of the tabernacle was not so large as the first. It was called the Holy of Holies. It was also hung round with beautiful curtains, but it only contained one thing. This was the Ark, a coffer of wood covered all over with gold. It was about five and a half feet long and two and a half wide, and the same in height. The lid or covering of the ark was called the Mercy-seat. It was made of pure gold. Upon the mercy-seat were two cherubims, each beaten out of one solid piece of gold. These angel figures were placed face to face, and their wings were spread out on high, and they covered the mercy-seat with their wings.

Within the ark were placed the two tables of

stone, written with the finger of God, Aaron's rod, and a pot containing some manna. Once in each year, and only once, the high priest entered alone into the Holy of Holies, and offered there a sacrifice of atonement for his own and the people's sins. The curtain was never lifted, and no one ever entered the Holy of Holies except at that solemn time, the tenth day of the seventh month, the great day of atonement. The seventh month answered to half our September and half our October.

The whole tabernacle was covered outside with curtains of goats' hair, and over that two strong sets of leather curtains to preserve it from the weather. The outer curtains were dyed red. Thus from the outside nothing was to be seen of the tabernacle but the red leather covering.

Round the tabernacle was a court, inclosed with curtains of fine twined linen, supported by pillars of wood adorned with silver. The curtain at the entrance of the court was of fine twined linen, embroidered with blue, and purple, and scarlet. Within this court, opposite to the entrance to the tabernacle, stood the altar for burnt-offerings, made of shittim-wood, overlaid with brass; and between this altar and the entrance to the tabernacle, stood the large b

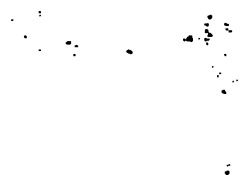


laver or basin, filled with water, for the priests to wash their hands and feet before they entered the tabernacle.

Then the splendid vestments for Aaron were made. The ephod, a short upper garment of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, with a curious girdle of the same costly materials ; and for each shoulder an ornament of an onyx stone set in gold, and upon each stone was engraved the names of six of the tribes of Israel. The breastplate to wear in front of the ephod was made also of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen. It was square in shape, and in it were set four rows of precious stones, three stones in each row, and upon each stone was engraved the name of a tribe, as upon the shoulder-plates. The breastplate was fastened to the ephod by chains and brooches of gold. There was made also a long robe of blue, upon the hem of which were hung bells of pure gold, and ornaments in the shape of pomegranates. This robe was worn underneath the ephod. And they made coats of fine wove linen for Aaron and his sons, and other girdles of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and a mitre for Aaron's head of fine linen ; and goodly caps. *And they made a holy crown of pure gold for*



Then the splendid vestments for Aaron were made.—



the mitre, and upon the plate in front were engraved these words, "Holiness to the Lord."

Everything was thus finished and put in its appointed place and order ; and when Moses had ended doing so, a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and He delivered to Moses all the directions for the sacrifices, and all the laws and commandments of the people of Israel, which are contained in the Book of Leviticus.

And the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night in the sight of the Israelites.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES, CALLED NUMBERS.

THE Book of Numbers is so called because it begins with the numbering of the people. It contains the history of thirty-nine years.

CHAPTER XLII.

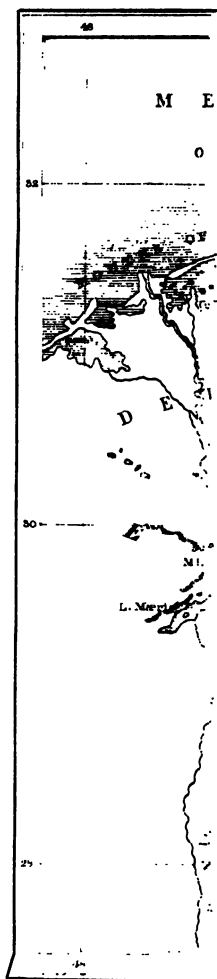
ON THE FIRST TO THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

AND the Lord spoke unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle, the second month of the second year from the departure or exodus from Egypt.

And the Lord directed Moses and Aaron to number all the people from the age of twenty upwards. And they did so ; and the number, besides women and children, was 603,550,—all men able to go out to war.

But the men of the tribe of Levi were not numbered ; for the Lord appointed the Levites to take charge of the tabernacle and all its sacred furniture. They were to take it down when the





Drawn & Engraved by Becker

cap removed, and to bear all its different parts on the journey, and to set it up when they stopped; any one who came near it at the time who was not a Levite, was to be put to death. And the Levites were always to pitch their tents round the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron, you remember, were of the tribe of Levi, and from the descendants of Aaron alone might the priests be chosen. And when the tabernacle was removed for a journey, the other Levites might not approach the ark till Aaron and his sons had reverently covered it, first with the curtain or veil which hung before it, then with another covering of leather, and lastly with a cloth of blue. The altar, and the candlesticks, and the table of shewbread, were likewise carefully covered by Aaron and his sons, and then the other Levites came in, and carried them away. All these holy things were borne through the journey upon the shoulders of the Levites appointed for that service; but the boards, the bars, the pillars, and the curtains of the tabernacle, were conveyed in wagons.

After keeping their second Passover, one year and a month since their departure from Egypt, the cloud removed from the tabernacle, and all the Israelites left the wilderness of Sinai, and

journeyed three days, through gloomy, desolate mountain passes. Moses had persuaded his brother-in-law, Hobab, to go with them, that he might see the goodness of the Lord, and be to them instead of eyes; for the country through which the people of Israel had to travel was his native country, and he knew it well.

And when the ark set forward, Moses said, "Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee."

And when the ark rested, he said, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."

Upon this journey the people began complaining again. And the Lord heard it, and His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord consumed those faint-hearted murmurers that lingered behind. (Deut. xxv. 18.)

Then the people cried unto Moses, and Moses prayed unto the Lord, and the fire was quenched. And Moses called that place "Taberah," which means "Burning."

And they journeyed on a little further, northeast from Mount Sinai, still through the dreary mountainous wilderness; and the Israelites began *to long* for meat to eat, and they wept and said,

"Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; and the cucumbers, and melons, and leeks, and onions, and garlic: and now our soul is dried away: nothing before our eyes but this manna."

Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent. And the anger of the Lord was kindled greatly; Moses, also, was sore displeased. And Moses complained bitterly to the Lord, and said, "Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people?—for they weep unto me saying, Give us flesh that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness."

Then the Lord in His kindness and mercy commanded Moses to appoint seventy of the elders of Israel, to whom the Lord said He would give His spirit, that they might help Moses, that he should not bear the burden of the people alone.

And the Lord commanded Moses to tell the Israelites, that since they had cried for *flesh*, *flesh* they should have to eat; not for one 

nor two days, nor twenty days, but for a whole month, until they should loathe it; because they had despised the Lord, and had wept, saying, "Why came we forth out of Egypt?"

And Moses said, "The people are six hundred thousand footmen, and Thou hast said, I will give them flesh that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain to suffice them, or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together to suffice them?"

And the Lord said unto Moses,

"Is the Lord's hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not."

And Moses went out, and told the people the word of the Lord. And Moses chose seventy elders, and set them round about the tabernacle.

And the Lord came down in a cloud, and took of the spirit that was in Moses, and laid it upon the seventy elders, and they prophesied and did not cease.

And two of them, named Eldad and Medad, prophesied in the camp; and a young man ran and told Moses.

Then Joshua said, "My lord Moses, forbid them." For he was jealous for his master; he *wished him* to be chief in everything, and he did

not like that any other man should have the gift of prophecy.

But Moses was not jealous for his own honour, and he said to his servant Joshua, "Art thou envious for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them!"

And Moses, and the other elders of Israel, went from the tabernacle into the camp.

And there went forth a wind from the Lord, and the quails came a second time, but in still more enormous numbers than at the first. For miles round the camp they lay in heaps upon the ground; and the people were up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, gathering quails; and he that gathered least gathered about three pecks.

But while the flesh of the quails was still between their teeth, before it was even chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against them, and the Lord smote them with a very great plague.

And Moses called the place "Kibroth-hattavah," which means, "the graves of the gluttons," because there they buried those greedy murderers.

And the people journeyed still north-east, till they reached Hazeroth, and there they abode.

4

CHAPTER XLIII.

ON THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

AND Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, on account of his wife Zipporah, who, you remember, was not an Israelitish woman, but a Midianite: for they did not like their brother to have married a stranger.

And they said, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not also spoken by us?"

And the Lord heard them.

Now Moses was very meek. All the exalted honour which the Lord had shown him, more than to any man that had ever been before him, had not made him proud.

And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, ye three, unto the tabernacle of the congregation."

And they went.

And the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle. And He called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth.

And the Lord said, that to other prophets He would make Himself known in visions, and

speak to them in dreams; but to His faithful servant Moses He would speak plainly, mouth to mouth, and he should see the presence of the Lord Himself; and the Lord said,

“Wherefore, then, were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Aaron and Miriam. And the cloud departed from the tabernacle. And Aaron looked at his sister, and behold her skin was turned as white as snow, with the terrible disease of leprosy.

And Aaron said to Moses, “Alas! my lord, lay not this sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly and sinned! Let her not be as one dead!”

And Moses cried unto the Lord, and said, “Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee!”

But the Lord would not forgive her sin so soon. He punished Miriam for her insolence with seven days of leprosy. And Miriam was shut out from the camp for seven days, for leprosy was a most infectious disease, and by the law of the Lord, whosoever was afflicted with it was commanded to live apart from friends and neighbours till they should be healed, which very seldom happened.

And when Miriam was well again, the people

removed from Hazeroth, and pitched their tents at Kadesh-barnea, in the wilderness of Paran. That same wilderness of Paran, in which Hagar and her son Ishmael went to dwell, when Abraham had sent them from him, about four hundred years before.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ON THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CHAPTERS OF NUMBERS.

THE Israelites had now reached the northern boundary of the Promised Land, eleven days' journey from Mount Sinai.

They had travelled through the great and terrible wilderness (Deut. i. 19), and arrived at Kadesh-barnea, near the hill country of the Amorites.

And Moses said unto the people of Israel (Deut. i. 20) : "Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold the Lord thy God doth set the land before thee ; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee. Fear not, neither be discouraged."

But the people were afraid. They actually

doubted the promise of the Lord. They feared to venture into the country of the Amorites, and would not trust themselves unto the Lord their God, who had brought them out of Egypt with so strong a hand, and had shown them so many proofs of His Almighty power.

They proposed to send men, to search, or spy out the land before them, and to bring word what it was like, and what cities there were in it.

And the Lord permitted this thing. Nothing is hidden from the Lord, and He knew how the people's want of faith would bring its own punishment. Since they would not trust in Him, it pleased Him to leave them to their own devices.

So Moses, by the commandment of the Lord, took one chief man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel ; and amongst them were Caleb of the tribe of Judah, and Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim, the faithful servant of Moses.

Moses directed these twelve men to discover whether the people of the country before them, even Canaan, were few or many, whether they were strong or weak ; whether they dwelt in cities and strongholds, or in tents ; also whether the land was good or bad, whether it was full of

trees or not ; and he told them to bring back some of the fruit of the land with them.

So these twelve men departed, and searched the land. And after forty days they returned to the camp, bringing with them as a sample of the fine fruits of the country, pomegranates and figs, and an immense bunch of grapes, so heavy that two of them bore it between them, fastened to a staff.

And they said to Moses and Aaron and to the people, " We came unto the land whither thou sentest us ; and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it.

" Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great, and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south ; and the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains, and the Canaanites by the sea side and the river Jordan."

The people began to look frightened and to murmur at this account, but Caleb stilled them before Moses, and said : " Let us go up at once, and possess it ; for we are well able to overcome it."

But all the other spies, except Joshua, contradicted Caleb, and said, " We are not able to go

up against this people, for they are stronger than we. All the people that we saw are men of a great stature. And we saw the giants, the sons of Anak ! and we were as grasshoppers compared to them."

When they heard this, all the people lifted up their voices and wept and lamented. And they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and began their old cry : " Would God we had died in the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in this wilderness ! Wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey ? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt ? "

And they said one to another, " Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. "

Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the children of Israel.

And Caleb and Joshua rent their clothes in token of their horror at this cowardly and rebellious proposal ; and they spake to the Israelites, saying, " The land which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us ; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel

not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land ; for they are bread for us ; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us ; fear them not."

But instead of listening to Caleb and Joshua, all the people in a riot bade stone them with stones.

Then the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the people of Israel.

CHAPTER XLV.

ON THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

AND the Lord said unto Moses,

"How long will this people provoke me ? And how long will it be before they believe me for all the signs which I have showed among them ? I will smite them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they."

Then Moses entreated the Lord for them, and besought the Lord, saying, 'I beseech Thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying : "The Lord is long suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers

upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.' Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of Thy people, according unto the greatness of Thy mercy, and as Thou hast forgiven this people until now."

And the Lord said,

"I have pardoned according to thy word. But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Because all those men which have seen my glory and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, have tempted me, now these often times, and have not hearkened unto my voice, surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers.

"Say unto them, as truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in my ears, so will I do unto you. Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness. Doubtless ye shall not come into the land which I sware to make you dwell in, except Caleb and Joshua, for they have wholly followed the Lord. (Numbers xxxii. 12.)

"But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcases shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in this wilder-

ness forty years, until your carcases shall be wasted in this wilderness. After the number of days in which ye searched the land, each day for a year, even forty years, shall ye bear your iniquities. I the Lord have said ; in the wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die.

“To-morrow turn you back, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.”

And that night, the ten men, who had brought up the evil report of the Promised Land, and made the people to murmur, died by the plague of the Lord. But Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, lived still.

And Moses told all the people what the Lord had said concerning them. And the people mourned greatly.

And they rose up early in the morning and gat them up into the top of the mountain, in spite of the Lord's command that they should return into the wilderness, and they said, “We will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised.”

In vain Moses reminded them that the Lord forbade them to go on any further towards the Promised Land, but commanded them to *return into the wilderness* ; they persisted in

going up to the Amorites' city at the top of the hill.

Then the Amorites rushed out upon them, and gained the victory over them ; and chased them back again. But the ark, Moses had not allowed to go with them ; it had remained in the camp.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ON THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

THE Israelites remained a long while in Kadesh. (Deut. i. 46.)

And Korah, a Levite, and Dathan, Abiram, and On, Reubenites, that is, descendants from Jacob's eldest son Reuben, with two hundred and fifty chief men, or princes of the Israelites, made a plot against Moses and Aaron. They were tired of having Moses for their ruler, and Aaron for high priest. So they all went in a body together before Moses and Aaron, and insolently told them, that they took too much upon them. That the whole congregation were holy, for the Lord was among them all equally, and that therefore Moses and Aaron had no right to consider themselves at all superior to the rest of the Israelites.

When Moses heard this rebellious speech, he fell upon his face, greatly shocked.

Then he told Korah and his companions to come before the Lord the next day, each with his censer to burn incense in his hand, and Aaron, he also, should bring his censer. And then it should be seen whom the Lord had chosen to be holy before Him.

But Dathan and Abiram refused to come, they said they would not obey Moses.

The next day Moses, and Aaron also with his censer, stood in the doorway of the tabernacle, and Korah, with the two hundred and fifty rebellious princes, each holding his censer, came. And the Israelites accompanied them, for Korah had gathered them all together. And they stood about the tabernacle, a great crowd of people, and the glory of the Lord appeared.

And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron :

“Separate yourselves from among the congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.”

And Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces, and said : “ O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation ? ”

Then the Lord commanded Moses to warn the people to go all away from about the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

And Moses rose up from the ground, and spake to the congregation, saying, "Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins."

Then all the people came away from about the tents of those wicked men. Not a soul dared stay near them ; and Dathan and Abiram, with their wives and their little children, came out, and stood in the entrance of their tents.

Then said Moses, "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works ; for I have not done them of my own mind ; if these men die as every man dieth, then the Lord hath not sent me ; but if the Lord make a new thing; and the earth open her mouth and swallow them up, with all belonging to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord."

And it came to pass, as Moses finished speaking, that the earth under the tents of Dathan and Abiram was parted asunder, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up Dathan and Abiram, and their wives, and their children, and their tents, and everything that they had, all went down into the deep dark chasm ; and all the Israelites that were round about, fled away at their terrible cry of horror and despair, as they

sank down alive into the pit—and the earth closed upon them—and they perished from among the congregation. And Korah was also swallowed up, but his children were spared. (Numb. xxvi. 11.)

Then there came a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty princes that offered incense, so they perished terribly also.

And the Lord gave commandment that the brazen censers of those sinners should be saved from the burning, and made into broad plates for a covering for the altar, to remind the children of Israel, and to warn them that no one who was not descended from Aaron might be made a priest to offer incense before the Lord, lest he should be destroyed like Korah and his company.

You might have thought that after this terrible and awful lesson, the people of Israel would have left off murmuring against Moses. But this was far from being the case. The very next day they gathered themselves together against him and Aaron, angry and murmuring, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord!" Little remembering that if it had not been that the Lord had hearkened to the supplications of Moses, they would have perished, all of them, long and long ago, for their repeated rebellions and murmurings.

Then they looked towards the tabernacle, and a cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. And the Lord spake unto Moses :

"Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment !"

Then Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces. And Moses bade Aaron go quickly with his censer and make an atonement for the people, for "there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague has begun !"

And Aaron did so, and ran among the people, with incense burning in his censer, but the plague, a terrible illness, speedily ending in death, had already begun.

And he stood between the living and the dead, and the plague stopped. But not before 14,700 people had been struck with the punishment of death.

As a still further proof that the Lord had chosen Aaron and his sons, and their descendants from amongst all the other Israelites to be priests alone before him, He commanded Moses to order the chief man of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, to bring a rod, upon each of which was to be written the name of a tribe, and upon the rod for the tribe of Levi, Aaron's name was to be written. These rods were to be laid up before

the Lord in the tabernacle, and the Lord said, that the man's rod, whom He should choose, should blossom.

And it came to pass the next day, that Moses went into the tabernacle to look at the rods, and behold, the rod that had Aaron's name upon it had brought forth buds and blossoms, and had yielded almonds; but the eleven other rods remained dry sticks as before.

And Moses brought forth all the rods and gave them back to their owners, but Aaron's rod, by commandment of the Lord, was taken back into the tabernacle, and placed in the ark, as a sign to the people that no one but of the family of Aaron might presume to take upon himself to be a priest before the Lord.

CHAPTER XLVII.

ON THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

You must now, my dear children, suppose that thirty-eight years have passed since the events of which you have read in the last chapters. Of what happened to the Israelites during all that long time we know nothing; only that they *were spent* in wanderings in the wilderness, for

you remember that this long wandering was their punishment for having refused to go up into the land of Canaan, when commanded by the Lord. The names of their different resting-places, during these thirty-eight years, you will find in the thirty-third chapter of Numbers.

At the end of this time, that is, in the first month of the fortieth year since the Exodus, or departure from Egypt, the Israelites arrived again at Kadesh, the very place from whence they had sent up the spies to spy out the land of Canaan thirty-eight years before.

And Miriam died, and was buried.

And there was no water, and the people began to murmur again, and to chide Moses with the same words they had so often used before; for we find them just as stiffnecked as ever, in no way improved and humbled by their punishment.

"Would God," they cried, "that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! Why have ye brought the people of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die? And wherefore have ye made us come out of Egypt to dwell in this evil place? This is no place of seed, nor of figs, nor of vines, nor of pomegranates! neither is there any  drink!"

Then Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces before the door of the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appeared as of old.

And the Lord commanded Moses to take Aaron's rod from out of the ark, and to assemble the people together, and to *speak* unto the rock before their eyes, and that the rock should bring forth water for the people and their cattle to drink.

And Moses took the rod, and he and Aaron called the people together before the rock, and said unto them, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"

Then Moses, instead of *speaking* to the rock, as the Lord had commanded, lifted up the rod, and smote it twice; and the water gushed out in abundance, and the thirsty people and their cattle drank of it.

But the Lord was wroth with Moses and Aaron, because they had taken upon themselves to disobey him, in smiting the rock with the rod, thus using an instrument, as if the word of God alone had not power to work the miracle; and the Lord was angry with Moses and Aaron, and said that they should not go over the river Jordan to that good land, which the Lord had given to his people for an inheritance; they

should die, and not go over. (Deut. iv. 21.) The place where the rock was struck was called Meribah, or "Strife."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ON THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

THE Israelites were now to enter Canaan on its eastern side, by crossing the river Jordan. Their shortest way from Kadesh was through the country of Edom, which was inhabited by the Edomites, who were descended from Esau. I hope you have not forgotten that Esau, or Edom, was brother to Jacob, or Israel, or that they both were grandsons of Abraham. The Edomites and Israelites were therefore equally descended from Abraham. And the Lord had commanded Moses (Deut. ii. 5) that the Israelites should not enter by force into Edom, or fight against the Edomites, or take anything from them without paying for it, not even water to drink ; for the Lord had given that land to the children of Esau for a possession.

Therefore Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, asking for leave to pass through his country, promising that they would travel quietly along the high

neither to the right nor to the left, doing no injury to the fields or vineyards, or drinking of the wells without paying for the water, so precious in those countries.

But the Edomites fiercely refused this permission to the Israelites, and would not allow them to pass through their country.

Therefore the Israelites turned southward again, going outside the boundary of the mountainous country of Edom, and came to Ezion-geber, a place situated upon the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. Here they turned northwards again, still coasting round Edom, and at length arrived at Mount Hor.

And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,

“Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the people of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the waters of Meribah. Take Aaron, and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor; and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son, and Aaron shall die there.”

And Moses did as the Lord commanded, and went up the steep mountain with Aaron and *Eleazar*, in the sight of all the people; and

Moses took Aaron's priestly garments from off him, and put them upon his son. And Aaron died there, and was buried. (Deut. x. 6.) Aaron the priest was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died, in the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites left Egypt. (ch. xxxiii. 38.)

And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount, and all the congregation mourned for Aaron thirty days.

Mount Hor is a very steep mountain, and very difficult to climb; so much so, that in some places the traveller has to make his way as well as he can—sometimes even upon his hands and knees. A great number of juniper trees grow upon the mountain, almost to the very summit, and many beautiful flowering plants.

A tomb is shown upon the mountain, a dark vault, in a kind of grotto, which is called the tomb of Aaron. It is certainly very ancient.*

And the people travelled on from Mount Hor through the wilderness; and they became weary of their long journeyings, the just punishment of their sins; and they began their murmurings afresh, speaking against God, and against Moses, and crying out for bread; for they loathed the manna.

* Irby and Mangles. Robinson.

And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and great numbers of them died.

Then the people came to Moses, confessing their sin in speaking against the Lord, and entreating Moses to pray unto the Lord for them. And Moses prayed unto the Lord ; and the Lord said unto Moses,

“Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.”

And Moses make a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, if a serpent bit any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

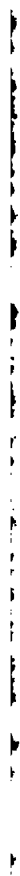
The Israelites did not understand then, as we understand now, that this serpent of brass raised upon a pole, which saved all who looked upon it from death, signified our Saviour, who was raised upon a cross, and died, to save all who trust, and who love Him, from everlasting death.

Our Lord says in the third chapter of St. John,

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life.”



And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on
a pole.—P. 212.



You will understand this more fully, my dear children, when you grow, as I trust you will, older and wiser.

CHAPTER XLIX.

ON THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

THE next resting-place of the Israelites was called Oboth. Thence they travelled still north-eastwards till they reached the brook Zered, the southern boundary of Moab.

And now the forty years of punishment being ended, and all the people who had rebelled being dead, their children, by this time grown up men and women, were commanded to pass over the brook into the country of Moab (Deut. ii. 16, 18), and to take possession of the promised land. The Moabites allowed the Israelites to pass peaceably through their country, and they then crossed the river Arnon, which separated the country of Moab from the country of the Amorites. And the Lord promised that He would deliver the Amorites into their hands. (Deut. ii. 24.)

Then Moses sent messengers unto Sihon, king of the Amorites, who was living at Heshbon, the capital city of the country, requesting him to

give the Israelites permission to pass through his land, promising that they would injure nothing, and would pay for any provisions they might require. (Deut. ii. 28.)

But Sihon refused, and assembling an army, went out to fight against the Israelites, and drive them from his country. But the Lord God gave his people the victory, and Sihon was slain, with all his sons, in a battle fought at a place called Jahaz. And the Israelites gained possession of all the cities of the Amorites, put all the wicked and idolatrous people to death, and took all their cattle and goods. Thus Israel obtained possession of the lands of these Amorites.

From thence they marched to Bashan, a very fertile country, farther north, on the banks of the Jordan. Og, the king of Bashan, was a great giant. His iron bedstead was sixteen feet long by seven wide. (Deut. iii. 11.) He went out with an army to fight against the Israelites at Edrei.

And the Lord said unto Moses,

“Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hands, and all his people, and all his land; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon, king of the Amorites, which dwelt at *Heshbon*.”

So the Israelites smote him, and his sons, and all his people, and possessed his land.

CHAPTER L.

ON THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

Now the Moabites possessed the plains by the river Jordan, as well as the country lying to the east of the Dead Sea, through which the Israelites had passed so peaceably.

And the Israelites pitched their tents in those plains opposite to Jericho, a large town on the other side of Jordan, belonging to the Canaanites.

And these Moabites, and their king, whose name was Balak, were very much afraid of the Israelites, for it was well known how they had conquered the Amorites and Og the king of Bashan.

Now there lived in the east, in the country of Mesopotamia (Deut. xxiii. 4), by the river Euphrates, a man called Balaam, who was famous for his wisdom. He was not an idolator, he worshipped the true God. You remember that Abraham left his own country in the east, to go into Canaan by the command of God, and still

in the east country some knowledge of the true God had, it seems, remained, though so many hundred years had passed since Abraham had departed from that land.

Balak sent messengers to Balaam to acquaint him of the arrival of this great army of strangers, these Israelites, and to tell him how afraid he was that they would take his kingdom from him, as they had conquered both the king of the Amorites and the king of Bashan. He therefore entreated Balaam would come and curse this people, that they might not gain the victory over him, "For I know," said he, "that whom thou blessest is blessed, and whom thou cursest is cursed."

So the Moabite messengers departed with presents, and came to Balaam and told him the words of Balak.

And Balaam invited them to pass the night with him, and he would bring them word what the Lord should say unto him.

And God came unto Balaam, and said,

"What men are these with thee?"

And Balaam said unto God, "Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, Behold there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth. Come now, curse me them; peradventure I

shall be able to overcome them and drive them out."

And God said unto Balaam,

"Thou shalt not go with them ; thou shalt not curse the people : for they are blessed."

And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak : "Get you into your land ; for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you."

So the messengers returned unto their own country, and told king Balak that Balaam refused to come with them.

Then Balak sent again to Balaam messengers. They were princes still more honourable than the first ; and they were told to promise Balaam all the honour and riches he could desire, if he would only come and curse the Israelites for Balak.

And Balaam said to these messengers, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more."

Nevertheless he asked them to stay the night, that he might know, he said, what more the Lord would say unto him.

This was very wrong of Balaam. He knew that the Lord is not one to change His purposes

as men do. He knows from the first what is right. But Balaam longed for Balak's offered rewards, and he could not bear to give up the chance of obtaining them. (2 Pet. ii. 16.)

And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, "If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them. But yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that thou shalt do."

It does not appear that the men did come to call Balaam; nevertheless, he rose up in the morning, saddled his ass, and went with them.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Balaam, because he went, and He sent His angel to slay him.

And the ass, upon which Balaam was riding, saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his sword drawn; but Balaam saw him not. And the ass turned out of the road into the field to avoid the angel; and Balaam struck the ass to make her go into the road again.

And they went on a little further, till they came to a path through a vineyard, with a wall on each side. And the angel stood in the middle of the path: and when the ass saw the angel again, she thrust herself against the wall to escape the angel, and crushed Balaam's foot *against the wall*; and he smote her again.

Then the angel went further, and stood in a very narrow part of the road, where there was only just room to pass, and no place to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel this third time, she fell down in terror, under Balaam. And Balaam flew into a passion with the poor ass, and he beat her with his staff.

And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?"

And Balaam said unto the ass, being quite mad himself with rage, "Because thou hast mocked me. I would there were a sword in my hand, for then would I kill thee!"

And the ass said unto Balaam, "Am I not thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee?"

And Balaam said, "Nay."

Thus the dumb ass speaking with man's voice rebuked the prophet for his iniquity. (2 Pet. ii. 16.)

Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his sword drawn in his hand.

he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.

And the angel of the Lord said unto him, "Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? Behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: and the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times. Unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive."

And Balaam answered, "I have sinned, for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me. Now, therefore, if it be evil in thine eyes, I will get me back again."

And the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, "Go with the men; but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that shalt thou speak."

So Balaam followed the messengers of Balak.

And when king Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went to the furthest boundary of his kingdom to meet him. And Balaam told him that, though he was come, yet could he not speak any other words than those which God should put into his mouth.

And Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kirjath-huzoth, which means "a city of streets," and Balak offered sheep and oxen.

On the morrow Balak took the prophet up into a mountain, to a place where the Moabites worshipped the idol Baal, that he might see from that high place the whole country round.

CHAPTER LI.

ON THE TWENTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

AND Balaam desired Balak to build seven altars, and they offered a bullock and a ram upon each altar. Then Balaam went into a place apart to receive the word of the Lord.

And the Lord put a blessing for Israel into the mouth of the prophet: and he returned and blessed Israel in the hearing of Balak and the princes of Moab.

Then said Balak unto him, "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether?"

And Balaam answered, "Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?"

Balak led Balaam to two other places, bullocks and rams as at first; and still put blessings for Israel into the mouth of

and by the Spirit of God he prophesied how greatly Israel would prosper, and that they should subdue all their enemies.

Then Balak was very angry, and smote his hands together, and said to Balaam, "I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore flee now to thy place: I thought to promote thee to great honour; but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour."

Then Balaam reminded Balak that he had told him beforehand that he could speak no other words than those which the Lord had commanded him to speak. "And now," he said, "behold I go back to my own country; come now, therefore, and I will tell thee what this people shall do unto thy people in days to come."

Then he prophesied, saying, "Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: he hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:

"I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy *all the children of Sheth.*"

This prophecy evidently relates to the coming of Christ, as well as to the destruction of the Moabite kingdom by the Israelites.

The prophecy of the *Star* and *Sceptre* that was to come out of Judah, was preserved in the East more than 1400 years after Balaam delivered it. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, you remember, wise men came from the East to worship him. They had seen "the star," they said—this long-expected *Star*. No doubt they were surprised when, instead of a king holding a "sceptre," sitting upon a throne, in a grand palace, they found a little baby, born of a lowly woman, lying in the manger of a stable.

The Spirit of God delivered other prophecies by the mouth of Balaam, concerning the neighbouring nations, which were all fulfilled in their time. Then Balaam returned home.

You will hear a little more about this unrighteous man as we go on.

CHAPTER LII.

ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH AND TWENTY-SIXTH CHAPTERS OF NUMBERS.

THE Israelites encamped in the plain
and remained there some months

soon began to make acquaintance with the wicked people of the land, a thing which the Lord had strictly forbidden ; and they became very intimate with them.

Now Balaam, it appears, had come again to Moab from his home in the east country, and he advised king Balak to take advantage of the friendship which had sprung up between the Israelites and the Moabites, and command the Moabite and Midianite women to persuade the people of the Lord to come to the sacrifices of their gods, and to bow down and eat before their idol Baal. Balaam's wicked counsel was taken, and succeeded only too well ; for the Israelites were enticed to follow the evil example of their idolatrous acquaintance.

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He sent a grievous plague among them. And the Lord commanded Moses to hang those rulers of the people who had turned aside with them to worship Baal, instead of doing all that lay in their power to prevent them.

And Moses did so, but the plague was not stayed, until twenty-four thousand people had perished by it.

And the Lord commanded Moses to send out *an army of Israelites to punish the Moabites and Midianites.*

So a thousand men went out of every tribe, twelve thousand in all, armed for war.

These Midianites dwelt in the country adjoining to Moab, and were allies or friends of the Moabites. They were not the same tribe as those Midianites who dwelt near the Red Sea, among whom Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a priest.

The Israelites gained great victories over the Midianites, and slew them and their kings; and burnt their cities and their splendid castles; and took their goods and their cattle for themselves. Balaam also was taken and slain, and thus met with the just punishment of his wickedness.

He knew that the Israelites were the chosen people of God, for God had made use of his mouth, as of an instrument, by which to acquaint the heathen nations with His will concerning them. However much he might have wished it, it was not in Balaam's power to speak any other words on that occasion than those of blessing, which the Lord had put into his mouth. But his love of money and honours was far greater than his love of God; and we see that he took the first opportunity of giving such advice as would be most likely to ruin the Israelites by depriving them of the favour of the Lord; and

thus, by serving Balak, he hoped, no doubt, to gain for himself at last the king's much coveted rewards.

All the cattle which the Israelites brought back into the camp, which they had taken from their enemies, were divided equally between the men who went out to battle and the rest of the congregation ; and from each of the shares, a certain number of cattle were given as a tribute to the Lord and to the Levites.

Not one of the twelve thousand who went out to war was missing, when they returned victorious to the camp (Numbers xxxi. 49) ; and in token of their gratitude to the Lord for having preserved them in safety during the war, they brought an offering of the spoils they had taken, in jewels of gold, chains, bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, six hundred and thirty-eight pounds weight of gold.

And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, Aaron's son, took the gold, and brought it into the tabernacle, for a memorial of the children of Israel before the Lord.

This offering, only a portion of the spoil in gold alone, which the Israelites had taken in the war, gives us some idea of the riches and wealth of the Moabite and Midianite nations. Of sheep,

oxen, and asses, the Israelite warriors brought back to the camp eight hundred and eight thousand.

Whilst in the plains of Moab, Moses and Eleazar, by the command of the Lord, again numbered the people, for the third time since their departure from Egypt. The number was found to be very much the same as the last time they were numbered,* and amongst them there was not one remaining of those above the age of twenty whom Moses and Aaron had numbered in the wilderness of Sinai except Caleb and Joshua, for the Lord had said of the people, "They shall surely die in the wilderness."

The Lord also gave unto Moses several directions concerning festivals and sacrifices, and many other laws. The Lord also instructed him what were to be the boundaries of the promised land, when the Israelites should have gained possession of it; and commanded that forty-eight cities should be given to the Levites for their share. Of these cities, six were to be appointed as cities of refuge, to which any man might flee for safety who should have had the misfortune to have killed a man accidentally.

Now the children of Reuben and of Gad had

* Milman.

a very great number of cattle ; and they saw that the land of Jazer and Gilead, the fertile country to the east of the river Jordan, which the people of Israel had taken from the Midianites and Moabites, was very suitable for feeding their flocks, so they asked permission of Moses to remain there, instead of going across the Jordan.

Moses reproved them severely, saying, " Shall your brethren go to war, and ye sit here ?" And he reminded them how the Lord had punished their fathers for refusing to go up into Canaan, and that, no doubt, they would be punished in the same way should they turn aside from following the Lord.

Then the Reubenites and Gadites asked Moses whether they might be permitted to build sheep-folds and cities for their cattle, their wives, and their little ones in Gilead that they might remain there in safety ; and that for themselves, they would go up armed with the rest of the Israelites, to conquer the country beyond Jordan. And till it was conquered they would promise not to return to the land which they wished to have for their inheritance.

And Moses said unto them, " If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the Lord to war, *over Jordan*, until the land be subdued before

the Lord, then afterwards ye shall return, and be guiltless before the Lord and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the Lord.

“But if ye will not do so, behold ye have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out. Build your cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.”

And the children of Reuben and of Gad spake unto Moses, saying, “Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.”

And Moses gave unto them, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, the eldest son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, and the cities of the country round about.

And the Lord appointed Eleazar the priest, and Joshua, and the prince or chief of each tribe, to divide the land of Canaan amongst the people of Israel, after that it should be conquered.

CHAPTER LIII.

ON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CHAPTER OF NUMBERS.

AND the Lord said unto Moses,

“Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and

see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered, for ye rebelled against my commandment, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes, that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh."

And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying :
"Let the Lord the God of the spirits of all flesh set a man over the congregation which may lead them out, and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd."

And the Lord said unto Moses,

"Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him and set him before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him before the Lord. At his word they shall come in, he, and all the congregation of Israel with him."

And Moses did as the Lord commanded him ; and he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest, before all the congregation. And the Lord appeared in the pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle (Deut. xxxi. 15). And the Lord said unto *Moses,*

"Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, and this people will rise up, and go after the gods of the strangers, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.

"Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall find them, so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? And I shall surely hide my face in that day, for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

"Now therefore write ye this song, and teach it the children of Israel, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel."

Moses therefore wrote the song the same day.

And he gave Joshua a charge in the sight of all Israel, and said unto him (Deut. xxxi. 7), "Be strong and of a good courage, for thou must go with this people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed."

And Moses rehearsed, that is, told again to

the people, all the mighty works which the Lord had done for them, and reminded them of their own and of their fathers' repeated acts of disobedience, and the heavy punishments which they had suffered in their wanderings in the wilderness. He reminded them of the victories which they had lately gained over their enemies by the help of the Lord their God, and he repeated to them the Ten Commandments, and many other laws which the Lord had given, of which the most important were those which commanded the entire destruction of all the idols and places of idol-worship belonging to the nations of the Canaanites amongst whom they would have to go.

"The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it, for it is a cursed thing." (Deut. vii. 25, 26.)

No Israelite, man or woman, might marry any woman or man of these idolatrous and most wicked nations. No peace was to be made with

them; they were all to be utterly destroyed, like dangerous and venomous beasts. For the Lord knew that they would not cast away their idols, and become worshippers of the true God, but that they would persuade the Israelites to forsake the true God, bow down to stocks and stones, and to imitate in every way their horrible and wicked practices. Therefore he commanded their utter destruction.

“And now, Israel,” said Moses unto them, “what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; to keep the commandments of the Lord, which I command thee for thy good?”

“Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, is the Lord’s thy God’s, the earth also, and all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you, above all people.

“Be therefore no more stiffnecked, for the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords; a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible. He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the

stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

“Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; Him shalt thou serve, and to Him shalt thou cleave. He is thy praise, and He is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons, and the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude; therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep His charge, and His statutes, and His judgments, and His commandments, alway.” (Deut. x. 12, and following verses.)

CHAPTER LIV.

ON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH, TWENTY-EIGHTH AND
TWENTY-NINTH CHAPTERS OF DEUTERONOMY.

FURTHERMORE, Moses told the people that when they came into the Promised Land, they should find two mountains opposite to one another, of which the name of the one was Ebal, and the other Gerizim. Upon Mount Ebal they were to set up two great stones, and write upon them the words of the law. Then six of the tribes were to stand upon Mount Ebal, and the other six

upon Mount Gerizim. From Mount Ebal, with a loud voice, the Levites were to denounce curses upon all who should disobey the laws of the Lord, and announce blessings to the obedient from Mount Gerizim.

Moses then told the people how great should be their blessings, would they but indeed obey the commandments of the Lord. Every work of their hands, their cattle and their crops, their goods and their children, should greatly prosper and increase. The Lord would open to them His good treasure the heaven, to give the rain unto their land, and they should lend unto many nations and not borrow. The Lord would cause their enemies to be smitten before their face, and would make them high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour, that they might be an holy people unto the Lord their God. (Deut. xxvi. 19.)

But should they be disobedient, then none of these good things should happen unto them. Themselves and their cattle the Lord would smite with disease and pestilence, and their crops and fruit with blight and mildew. No rain should water their land; it should turn to dust and powder; their enemies should smite them, and carry them captives away; they should

grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness; they should not prosper in their ways; they should be oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man should save them.

“Because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things, therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord God shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.”

And Moses warned the people that if they persisted in disobedience, the Lord would bring against them a nation from far; a nation of a fierce countenance, and very cruel, who should destroy their fields, and their vineyards, and their beautiful gardens, and leave them nothing to eat; who should besiege their strong cities, starve them with hunger till they should be obliged to surrender; for the famine should be so terrible, that fathers and mothers should actually kill and eat their own children!

Then should they be scattered among all people, from one end of the earth to the other, and find no ease nor rest. In the morning they should say, “Would God it were evening!” and in the evening they should say, “Would God it

were morning!" for the fear they should fear, and the sight they should see.

They should be taken back again into Egypt, and sent to the slave-market, to be sold for bondmen and bondwomen, and should be so miserable and wretched, that no one would buy them.

"And all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger?"

"Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers; for they went and served other gods and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and He had not given unto them. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book. And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day." (Deut. xxix. 24, and following verses.)

But if Israel would repent, and turn from their evil ways, and turn unto the Lord with all their heart, "then," said Moses unto them, "the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy

God hath scattered thee, and will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed, and will make thee plenteous in every work, and in the fruit of thy cattle and of thy land; for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as He rejoiced over thy fathers, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God."

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." (Deut. xxx.)

And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites which bear the ark, saying,

"Take this book of the law, and put it inside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee; for I know thy rebellion and thy stiff-neck. Behold while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord, and how much more after my death? I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and evil will befall you in the latter days, because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger."

Then Moses called all the chief of the Israelites to be assembled before him, and spoke the words of the song which the Lord had taught

unto him (see p. 231) in the ears of all the congregation of Israel. (Deut. xxxi. 24, and following.)

This most beautiful song, my dear children, you will find in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy. Many of you, I hope, who have been reading this little book, will be able to understand and admire it; and I advise you to look for it in your Bibles and read it.

CHAPTER LV.

ON THE THIRTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF DEUTERONOMY.

AND now the time has come that Moses must die. But before he went up into the mountain, as the Lord had commanded him, he blessed each one of the tribes of Israel by name; to each one he gave a different blessing. And thus he ended his blessing:

“There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun (Israel), who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are His everlasting arms: and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them!

“Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: his

heaven shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people ! saved by the Lord, the 'shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency :"

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab into the mountain of Nebo, which is also called Abarim, and Pisgah, or hill, opposite to Jericho, the city of palm trees. And the Lord showed him the beautiful Promised Land, stretching far away to the blue Mediterranean Sea ; a land of lofty mountains, and fertile hills and valleys ; and all the land of Gilead, the land of rich plains and pastures, which the children of Reuben and of Gad had obtained for their inheritance. There lay Canaan, spread like a map at Moses' feet,—the promised land, to whose boundaries he had at length brought his people, after forty years of wanderings, and toils, and trials.

And he might not enter it.

No ; Moses was going to a still brighter country to a Promised Land where no more could he be vexed and sorely tried by the obstinacy, and disobedience, and ingratitude of the people he had led so faithfully. He was going to heaven, to dwell with the Lord his God for ever.

So Moses the servant of the Lord died on

Mount Nebo, in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

No man was with him at his death : yet he could not have been alone. No doubt the presence of his God was left with him to the last, as indeed it is with all His faithful servants.

No man buried Moses, or saw his sepulchre. The Lord buried him in a valley opposite Beth-Peor.

Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eye was not dim, nor his strength abated.

And the children of Israel mourned and wept for Moses thirty days.

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom ; for Moses had laid his hand upon him. And the children of Israel hearkened unto him.

“ And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land. And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.” (Deut. xxxiv. 10.)

Once again Moses appeared upon this earth.

It was on that solemn occasion when, upon the mount in Canaan, the three favoured apostles beheld him in company with the prophet Elijah, talking to their Lord and Master when He was transfigured before them. And when from the cloud that overshadowed them, the solemn voice was heard,

“This is my beloved Son ; hear Him !” (Mark ix. 2, and following.)

ON THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

THE Book of Joshua was written by Joshua. In the last chapter it is written, "Joshua wrote all these words in the book of the law of God," the sacred history preserved in the ark of the covenant.

As it is not possible that Joshua could have written the account of his own death contained in the five last verses of the book, it is supposed that these were written by Eleazar, Phineas, or Samuel.

The Book of Joshua contains the history of about thirty years.*

CHAPTER LVI.

ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

A. M. 2570.—B. C. 1434.

Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord spake unto Joshua, and directed him to take the command of the people of Israel, and lead them over the river Jordan.

* Tomline.

The Lord spake unto Joshua, saying,

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses so will I be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous."

And the Lord commanded Joshua to obey the words of the law in all things, and to meditate upon them day and night, for then he should have good success, and the Lord his God would be with him whithersoever he went.

You see, dear children, that faith and obedience were the two great virtues, the exercise of which the Lord required from Joshua. *Faith* by which *believing* in the promises of God he need fear nothing. "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must *believe* that He is" (Heb. xi. 6), and that He is able to do all that He hath promised; and "to *obey* is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people to go through the camp, and order all to prepare the necessary, food for that in three days

more they were to cross the river Jordan, to possess the land which the Lord had given them.

Joshua likewise reminded the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh of the promise they had solemnly made to help their brethren in the conquest of Canaan before they settled themselves in the rich pastures on that side Jordan which they had desired for their inheritance.

They promised Joshua that they would keep their word, and that they would obey Joshua in all things as they had obeyed Moses.

"Whosoever he be," they said, "that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words, he shall be put to death ; only be strong and of a good courage."

Joshua then sent out two men secretly, to cross the river and spy out Jericho, the "city of palm trees," and to bring him back an account of all that they should observe.

So the two men departed from the camp, reached Jericho in safety, and entered an inn which was kept by a woman called Rahab, to pass the night.

By some means it came to the knowledge of the king of Jericho, that two of those Israelites who were now become such a terror to all the

neighbouring kingdoms, from their extraordinary conquests, had contrived to get into his city to spy out its strength, and that they were lodging at Rahab's house.

Then the king of Jericho sent immediately to Rahab, desiring her to give up those men.

But Rahab hastened and hid them amongst some bundles of flax, which were drying upon the flat terrace roof of her house ; then she went down and told the king's messengers that it was certainly true that two strangers had been at her inn, but they had left it just before the city gates were shut, and she knew not which way they had gone.

" Pursue after them quickly," said she, " and ye shall overtake them."

Rahab, you must remember, was of a nation of idolaters. She had never been taught that on no account whatever can it be right to tell a falsehood.

The king's messengers believing all she told them went in pursuit of the men they were in search of, as far as the fords, or crossing places of Jordan ; and as soon as they were out of the town, the gates, which had been opened to let them pass, were shut again.

Meanwhile Rahab went up to the two

Israelites whose lives she had saved, and said unto them,

“I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you ; for we have heard how the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt, and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard these things our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you ; for the Lord your God He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.”

“Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father’s house, and will save alive my father and my mother, and my brethren and my sisters, and all that they have.”

And the men answered her, “Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business ; and it shall be when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.”

Then they directed her, when the Israelites should march into the land, to bind a line of

scarlet thread in the window, and to assemble all her family together in her house ; and they promised that no harm should befall them when Jericho was taken, if they would only remain within doors ; but if any of them ventured into the street their blood must be upon their own heads ; for they could not ensure their safety.

Rahab said, "According unto your words, so be it." Rahab then advised the two spies to go and hide themselves for three days in the mountains, for fear the king's messengers should find them, as by that time their pursuers would have returned, having given up the search for them as useless, and they might be able to re-cross the Jordan in safety.

Then she let them down by a cord, through the window, for her house was built upon the town wall, and they departed, and she bound the scarlet thread in the window.

The two spies, following Rahab's advice, concealed themselves in the mountains for three days, and then returned in safety to Joshua, and gave him an account of all that had befallen them.

"Truly," said they, "the Lord hath delivered unto us all the land, for even all the inhabitants of the land do melt because of us."

CHAPTER LVII.

ON THE THIRD, FOURTH, AND FIFTH CHAPTERS
OF JOSHUA.

EARLY the next morning, the whole host of the Israelites took up their tents and left Shittim, and came to the banks of Jordan.

It was now the time of harvest, when the heat of the sun having melted the snows upon the mountains of Lebanon, the waters of Jordan were swollen, overflowing its banks. The width of this deep and rapid river is now, at the same season of the year about a hundred feet across. It has, as it were, two sets of banks ; the outer ones are high, and between these and the real banks of the river is a strip of ground overgrown with cane, willow, and tamarisk, reaching to the water's edge.

Above Jericho, these plants give place to lofty trees, and the beautiful oleander shrub with its branches of large pink blossoms, while the valley is covered with rich grass. The waters of the Jordan are deliciously sweet.*

After three days' stay by the river's banks, the officers went through the host of the Israelites, and commanded them, when they saw the Levites

* Robinson. Burckhardt.

bearing the ark of the covenant onwards, to remove and follow it at a certain distance, that they might know the way by which they were to go.

And Joshua told the people to sanctify themselves, for that to-morrow the Lord would do wonders among them. And Joshua said to them, "Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God ; hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

"Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth, passeth over before you into Jordan. Now therefore take you twelve men, out of every tribe a man ; and it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above : and they shall stand upon an heap."

And so it was. The priests bore the ark before the people, and as soon as their feet touched the river's brink, the waters that were flowing along from the source of the river ceased

flowing, and rose like a wall of water, and were cut off from the waters that were flowing into the Red Sea, in such a manner that there was left dry a wide passage quite across the river's channel; and the priests that bore the ark walked into the midst of the dried-up channel, and stood firm until all the Israelites had passed across the river to the opposite bank, like as they had passed with their fathers through the Red Sea, forty years before, when they themselves were either not born, or only little children.

Then Joshua, by the word of the Lord, commanded the twelve men chosen from the different tribes, to take each a stone from the place where the ark had rested in the midst of Jordan, and leave them in the place where they should lodge that night.

And the twelve men did as the Lord commanded. Each man took a stone from the bed of the river, and bore it away on his shoulder.

And Joshua set up twelve other stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests that bare the ark had stood, and there they were still remaining when Joshua wrote his history, and no doubt for long after, though no trace remains of them now.

When all the people had passed over the river then the priests bare the ark over, in the presence of all the people; and as soon as their feet touched the opposite bank, the waters of Jordan returned to their place, and overflowed the banks as they had done before.

It was the tenth day of the first month, that is, about the end of our month of March—the harvest in the sultry east is much earlier than with us—it was the tenth day of the first month that the Israelites then, without bridge or ford, but by means of a miracle of the Lord's, crossed the Jordan; and they encamped in Gilgal a little to the east of Jericho. And Joshua set up in Gilgal those twelve stones which the twelve men had taken out of Jordan.

And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying,

“When your children shall ask their fathers, in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up from before us, until we were gone over. That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty :

that ye might fear the Lord your God for all days."

And the children of Israel kept the Passover at Gilgal in the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, as the Lord had appointed.

And now, for the first time since they had crossed the Red Sea, did the Israelites again taste wheat. On the day after the Passover they eat unleavened cakes and parched corn* of the growth of the land. And the next day the supply of manna, which had so miraculously furnished them with food these forty years, ceased. They had manna no more, for they needed it no longer; they had come to Canaan, the rich and fertile land of their inheritance.

CHAPTER LVIII.

ON THE FIFTH AND SIXTH CHAPTERS OF JOSHUA.

AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites on the west of Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites by the Mediterranean

* "In the season of harvest the grains of wheat, not yet fully dry, are roasted in a pan, and constitute a very palatable article of food. This is eaten along with bread or instead of it. Indeed the use of it is so common among the labourers (of Palestine) at this season, that this parched wheat is sold in the markets."—ROBINSON.

Sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan till the Israelites had passed over, that a very great fear fell upon them, "their heart melted, neither was there spirit" (or courage) "in them any more, because of the children of Israel."

Now the gates of Jericho were closely shut up for fear of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go out or to come in. And it came to pass when Joshua was near Jericho, on a certain day, that he looked up, and behold, there stood a man opposite to him, with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went up to him and said, "Art thou for us, or for our enemies?"

And he said, "Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come."

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, "What saith my Lord unto his servant?"

And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy."

These very words were addressed to Moses from the burning bush on Mount Sinai, you will remember.

And Joshua did as Moses had done; he took his shoes from off his feet, and the Lord said unto him:





See, I have given unto thine hands Jericho."—P. 255.

"See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once ; thus shall ye do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns. And the seventh day ye shall go round the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the rams' horns, when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city shall fall down flat ; and the people shall ascend up, every man straight before him."

And Joshua went, and gave commandment to the priests and to the people, according to the word of the Lord.

And when Joshua had done speaking, the ark was brought forth from the tabernacle ; and seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns, passed on before, and blew with the trumpets, and the ark of the Lord followed them. Armed men went before the seven priests, and the rest of the host followed after the ark.

And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, " Ye shall not shout nor make your voice to

be heard, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid ye shout, then shall ye shout."

Thus, in solemn silence, the army of the Israelites marched once round the walls of Jericho. No sound was heard from that mighty host, but the pacing of their feet, and the loud, continued blast from the seven trumpets.

Then the ark was borne back to the tabernacle, and the army returned to the camp.

Early the next morning the same procession marched round the walls of the doomed city. And thus it continued to do for six days in succession.

What must the people of Jericho have thought when they beheld this solemn ceremony? When they first saw the army of Israelites advancing to their city walls, probably they expected an immediate and fierce assault. How much they must have been surprised when they saw their expected assailants march once in solemn silence round their city, and then return in quiet order to their camp. Perhaps they thought they were afraid to make any attempt against Jericho, when they beheld the strength and height of its walls.

On the seventh day the host of Israel rose very

early, about the dawning of the day ; and they went round the town seven times. Only on that day did they compass the town seven times.

And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people,

“Shout ! for the Lord hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, and all that are therein ; only Rahab shall live, she, and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.”

And Joshua strictly forbade the people to take anything for themselves out of the accursed city. They were the executors of the righteous judgments of the Lord upon that wicked city ; they were come to punish and utterly destroy ; not as a band of robbers to enrich themselves by its plunder. Only the gold and silver and vessels of brass and iron were to be saved. These were made holy to the Lord, and were to be taken to the treasury of the sanctuary of the Lord.

And it came to pass after Joshua had given these directions, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet that the people shouted with a great shout.

And instantly the lofty walls fell down flat upon the ground.

And the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. And they utterly destroyed every living thing that was in the city, except Rahab and her family, for Joshua sent the two men whose lives she had saved, to take care of her and her relations, and to lead them out of Jericho.

And Jericho was burnt with fire, and everything that was in it; except the gold and silver, the iron and the brass, which was commanded to be saved.

And Joshua saved Rahab and her father's household, and all that she had, and she was still living in Israel at the time of Joshua's death. She married a man of the tribe of Judah, named Salmon; their son Boaz was great grandfather to King David, from whom was descended Mary the mother of our Lord.

And Joshua adjured the people, when Jericho was taken, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest shall he set up the gates thereof."

It was not till more than five hundred years after this utter destruction of Jericho by the *Israelites* under Joshua that any one was found

audacious enough to rebuild the "cursed city." Then, in the reign of Ahab, a wicked king of Israel, a man of the name of Hiel actually did rebuild it; and the curse, whatever was its meaning, was fulfilled upon him (1 Kings xvi. 34); "for who hath hardened himself against the Lord and hath prospered?" (Job ix. 4.)

This strong and wealthy "city of palm trees" stood upon a wide and fertile plain; the plain is now only sprinkled with desert shrubs and occasional patches of coarse grass. Nothing marks the spot where the town once stood but a ruined tower, some old foundations, and a most miserable and dirty village, the hovels of which are made of the stones taken from the ancient ruins, piled loosely one upon another, and covered in with a roof of corn-stalks overlaid with gravel. Each hut is surrounded by a hedge of dry thorns. Of the groves that once grew there, only one single palm tree is left. The inhabitants of this wretched village are lazy and good-for-nothing, and miserably poor.*

After the awful destruction of Jericho the fame of Joshua was noised throughout the whole country, and the inhabitants must have been more terrified than ever by this irresistible army

* Robinson.

of conquering strangers which had so suddenly appeared amongst them.

CHAPTER LIX.

ON THE SEVENTH CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

IN the last chapter you have read how strictly the Israelites were forbidden to take a single thing for themselves from among the spoils of Jericho.

But there was a man of the tribe of Judah, named Achan, who disobeyed the commandment of the Lord ; and tempted by the sin of covetousness and the love of money, that root of all evil (1 Tim. vi. 10), he stole a beautiful Babylonian garment, a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, worth about £90 of our money, and two hundred shekels of silver, worth about £22, and digging a hole in the earthen floor of his tent, he hid his booty there, telling no one.

Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to go to a town called Ai, situated about ten miles north-west of Jericho, in order that they might bring him back an account of its strength.

The men went and returned, and brought back word to Joshua, that it was not necessary for the

whole army of Israel to go up against the town. Two or three thousand men would be quite sufficient, they said, to take it, for it had but few inhabitants.

Accordingly, about three thousand men were sent to take the place. But instead of taking it, they were seized with a sudden panic, or fear, and fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai killed thirty-six of them, and chased the rest, and smote them as far as Shebarim.

And the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

And Joshua rent his clothes, and he and the elders of Israel fell to the earth upon their faces before the ark of the Lord until evening, and put dust upon their heads.

And Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord! what shall I say when Israel turn their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites, and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall surround us, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?"

And the Lord said unto Joshua,

“Get thee up! Wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israël hath sinned, and transgressed my covenant; for they have even taken of the accursed thing (Deut. vii. 25, 26), and have also stolen, and dissembled also; and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

“In the morning, therefore, ye shall be brought according to your tribes; and it shall be that the tribe which the Lord taketh shall come according to the families thereof, and the family which the Lord shall take shall come by households, and the household which the Lord shall take shall come man by man. And it shall come to pass that he which is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he, and all that he hath, because he hath transgressed the covenant of the Lord.”

So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and assembled the people according to the word of the Lord.

And Achan was taken.

And Joshua said unto Achan, “My son,

give, I pray thee, glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him, and tell me now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me."

And Achan answered, "Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel."

Then he confessed what he had done.

And Joshua sent messengers, and they went to Achan's tent, and found the garment hidden in the earth, and the gold and silver under it; and they took them and brought them unto Joshua and the people, and laid them out before the Lord.

And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan, and the wedge of gold, and the silver, and the garment, and everything that he had, and brought them to a valley. And all Israel put him to death with stones, and then burned his body and all that he had with fire. And they raised over the ashes a great heap of stones, "which remaineth," writes Joshua in his history, "unto this day."

So the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger; and the valley they named Achor, which means "trouble."



CHAPTER LX.

ON THE EIGHTH CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

AND the Lord spake unto Joshua, and commanded him to go up again against Ai with all the men of war, and not to fear, for the town should be delivered into their hands.

Joshua was directed to put the king of Ai and his people all to death; but the spoil and the cattle the Israelites were to preserve this time as a prey for themselves.

Why the Israelites were permitted to take of the spoil of Ai, while they were forbidden to carry away a single thing for themselves from Jericho, is not explained; but it was for some great and good reason, otherwise the Lord would not have commanded it. It might have been that Ai, like the cities on the east of Jordan, was to be taken by means of the Israelites' own exertions, and that they were to be permitted to take unto themselves a recompence for the fatigues and dangers they had incurred, whilst Jericho fell by a special miracle of the Lord.

The next morning Joshua chose thirty thousand men of valour from amongst the Israelite host, and directed them to conceal themselves in

ambush near the city. He told them that he would advance with another division of the army against Ai as if to attack it, and when the people came out of the town to drive them away, he and his soldiers, pretending to be seized with a panic as before, would fly before them, and thus draw them on in pursuit far from the town. As soon as the men in ambush saw this, they were to rush into Ai, and take it, for the Lord would deliver it into their hands, and were to set fire to it, and burn it.

Everything happened as Joshua had foreseen. The men of Ai were enticed in pursuit of the flying Israelites far from their city, quite unsuspecting of the men in ambush. There was not a man left in Ai, or the neighbouring town of Bethel; they all went out in pursuit of the enemy, leaving the city gates open and undefended.

And the Lord said unto Joshua,

“Stretch out the spear that is in thine hand towards Ai, for I will give it into thy hand.”

And Joshua did so.

And the men in ambush left their hiding-place and rushed into the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and

behold the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven. And Joshua and the Israelites whom they were pursuing turned upon them, and those who had taken the city came out against them ; and they were surrounded by their enemies on every side, and there was no place for them to flee to. And they were smitten and slain, not one was left alive, except the king, whom they led before Joshua.

Thus all the inhabitants of Ai perished. The number of those who were slain in the battle, and put to death in the town, were twelve thousand. Only the cattle and the spoil were saved. And Ai was burnt down to the ground, and made a heap, and a desolation for ever.

The idolatrous king was hanged on a tree till evening, when his body was taken down, and buried under a great heap of stones, at the spot where the gates of the city had been.

After this Joshua fulfilled the commandment which Moses had given him before his death. He built an altar of whole stones upon Mount Ebal, and they offered thereon burnt offerings and peace offerings unto the Lord. And Joshua wrote upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses.

A narrow and beautifully fertile valley sepa-

rates the precipices of the two steep and rocky mountains, Ebal and Gerizim. And the ark of the Lord was brought forth, and the priests and the Levites, the elders, and judges, and officers, the twelve tribes of Israel, and all the strangers who were with them—that “mixed multitude” who had accompanied them out of Egypt—were assembled. And six of the tribes ascended and stood upon Mount Ebal, and six upon Mount Gerizim. Those upon Mount Ebal pronounced a curse upon all who should transgress the law of the Lord, and those upon Mount Gerizim a blessing upon those who should keep it.

Afterwards Joshua read aloud to the assembled multitude, men, women, and children, every word of the law. There was not one word which Joshua read not.

CHAPTER LXI.

ON THE NINTH CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

ABOUT fifteen or twenty miles west of Jericho there was a Hivite city called Gibeon. It was a large town, a “royal city” (Josh. x. 2), built upon a hill, in the midst of a beautiful plain, which is even now one of the finest and most

fertile spots in Palestine, full of corn-fields and vineyards, with orchards of fig-trees and olive-trees, of apple and pear-trees. At the present day a village stands upon the hill, which is called el Jib.*

The inhabitants of Gibeon were numerous and brave, and seemingly well able to defend themselves. Nevertheless, when they heard what had befallen Jericho and Ai, they were greatly alarmed, fearing also to be destroyed by the victorious Israelites.

Therefore they determined, if possible, to make friends with them, and place Gibeon under their protection.

This, however, it did not seem very easy to do, as they knew that the Israelites had made no treaties or friendships with any of the nations of the land, but on the contrary seemed determined to exterminate every living soul. So they had recourse to a stratagem, or trick to gain their purpose.

Some of the men of Gibeon dressed themselves in old, ragged clothes, put mouldy bread, and old patched and torn water skins† upon their

* Robinson.

† Skins are still used in those countries for holding water, wine, and other liquids, instead of bottles.

asses, and set off for the Israelite camp at Gilgal, intending to pass themselves off for ambassadors who had travelled a long, long way from a distant country.

They soon reached Gilgal and came before Joshua and the men of Israel, and told their tale, saying : " We be come from a far country ; now therefore make ye a league with us."

And the men of Israel said, " Perhaps ye dwell in this country, and how can we make a league with you ?"

And they said unto Joshua, " We are thy servants."

And Joshua said, " Who are you ? and from whence come ye ?"

And they said unto him, " From a very far country thy servants are come, because of the name of the Lord thy God ; for we have heard the fame of Him, and all that He did in Egypt ; and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites beyond Jordan, Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan.

" Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country, spake to us saying : Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, we are your servants, now therefore make a league with us.

"This our bread, we took hot for our provision out of our houses when we set out to come to you ; but now behold, it is dry and mouldy ; and these skins of wine which we filled were new, and behold they are torn ; and these our garments and our shoes are worn out, by reason of the very long journey."

Then Joshua and the princes of Israel at once believing all this tale, agreed to make a treaty with the strangers, presumptuously neglecting to ask counsel of the Lord.

Three days after they found out that they had been deceived, and that the pretended travellers were their near neighbours. Accordingly the Israelites set out for Gibeon, which they reached on the third day. But it was not attacked on account of the treaty which Joshua and the princes had made. Then the Israelite army became very angry, and murmured against their princes.

The princes said : "We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel, therefore we may not touch them. We will let them live, lest wrath fall upon us because of our oath ; but let them be hewers of wood and drawers of water unto all the congregation."

And Joshua called the Gibeonites before him, and said unto them,

"Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying ; We are very far from you, when ye dwell amongst us ? Now, therefore, ye are cursed, and there shall none of ye be free. Ye shall be bondmen, and hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the house of my God."

Then the Gibeonites tried to excuse their falsehood, saying that they knew that the Lord had given commandment to the Israelites to take the land of Canaan and destroy its inhabitants ; that they were sore afraid for their lives, and that was the cause of their deceit. " And now," said they ; " behold we are in thy hand. As seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do."

Thus the Gibeonites became bond-servants to the congregation of the Israelites. They were appointed for the express service of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple at Jerusalem, to do all the hard work for the Levites ; they were called "Nethinims" which means "given." The Nethinims are mentioned in the book of Nehemiah written about a thousand years after their subjection, which shows that the order was still at that time in existence. (Neh. x. 28.)

CHAPTER LXII.

ON THE TENTH CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

Now when Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how that the Israelites had destroyed Jericho and Ai, and that the Gibeonites had submitted to them, he was greatly alarmed ; and he sent to four other kings of the Amorites to acquaint them with the treaty of peace which Gibeon had made with Israel ; and he urged them to join him in punishing that city for setting, as he thought, so dangerous an example to the people of Canaan.

The kings consented to Adoni-zedek's proposal, and assembled all their hosts together, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua, saying : "Slack not thy hands from thy servants ; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us ; for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains, are gathered together against us."

So Joshua went from Gilgal to help Gibeon ; and all the mighty men of valour with him.

And the Lord said unto Joshua,

"Fear not. For I have delivered them into

thy hand ; there shall not a man of them stand before thee."

And Joshua and his army went by night, and fell suddenly upon the Amorites ; and the Lord discomfitted them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter before Gibeon, and chased them along the way to Beth-horon, and smote them as far as Makkedah. And as the Amorites fled from before the Israelites, the Lord cast great hail-stones upon them from heaven ; and more were killed by the hail-stones than by the people of Israel.

Then Joshua spoke to the Lord, and said in the sight of Israel,

"Light of the sun stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou light of the moon, in the valley of Ajalon."

So the light remained until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher ?* So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

And there was no day like that before or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.

* Or "the Upright." The author of this book is unknown. The above is the only passage quoted from it.

But the five Amorite kings had escaped the slaughter, and fled to Makkedah, and hid themselves in a cave. They were, however, soon discovered, and word was brought to Joshua.

And Joshua commanded that the mouth of the cave should be stopped up with large stones, and a guard placed to watch it, but that the pursuit of the enemy was not to cease. And it ceased not till the army of the Amorites was utterly destroyed, except a few men who escaped into fenced cities.

Then all the people returned in peace to Joshua who had remained at Makkedah.

Then said Joshua, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me."

And they did so.

And it came to pass when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains, "Come near: put your feet upon the necks of these kings."

And the captains did so.

And Joshua said unto them, "Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong and of a good courage; for thus shall the Lord do unto all your enemies against whom ye fight."

And afterwards Joshua slew them, and hanged

them upon five trees till the evening. And at evening Joshua commanded that their bodies should be taken down and cast into the cave where they had concealed themselves; and the great stones were rolled again to the mouth of the cave, which thus became the sepulchre of those five wicked Amorite kings.

After this great victory, Joshua and his army went through all the hill country of the Amorites, conquering and utterly destroying all the cities and their inhabitants, as the Lord God of Israel commanded. They conquered the whole country from Gaza to Kadesh-barnea, on the southern boundary of Canaan, and from Goshen to Gibeon. All the kings and their land did Joshua take in this one expedition, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel.

And Joshua returned with his men of war to the camp at Gilgal.

In reading these accounts of the total extermination of "everyliving creature that breathed" by the Israelites, you must constantly bear in mind, my dear children, the exceeding wickedness of these idolatrous Canaanites, with which the Lord had had patience so long. Before Abraham's time they were sunk in iniquity, but still the Lord bore with them; for when He promised

to Abraham that his descendants should return from their captivity in Egypt to possess the land, He had said,

“Not till the fourth generation, *for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.*” (Gen. xv. 16.)

Now it was full. It was not possible for them to be more wicked, and the time of their punishment had arrived.

You have frequently heard that they were a nation of idolaters. One of these dreadful idols was called Moloch, and parents did not hesitate to burn their own little children alive, passing them through fiery furnaces, as sacrifices to Moloch, thinking by this cruel and inhuman practice to acquire the favour of their god. You may think it strange that they should choose to worship anything so wicked as Moloch must have been to have been pleased with such horrible sacrifices, even had he really existed; but all this people's imaginations were wicked exceedingly. They loved wickedness, they had lost all idea of goodness. Wickedness they made their god, and he ruled them with a rod of iron, as he rules now, and always will rule those who serve him, by following their own evil passions; till that blessed time shall come when he shall be destroyed for ever and ever in the lake of fire

and brimstone (Rev. xx. 10), and there shall be wickedness no more.

CHAPTER LXIII.

ON THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

THE northern parts of Canaan still remained to be conquered. This portion of the Promised Land was divided into numerous small kingdoms, like the south country. The chief of them was that of Hazor, and the king of Hazor's name was Jabin.

When Jabin heard that the Israelites had conquered all the south of Canaan, he sent to all the neighbouring kings, the kings of the mountains, and the plains, and the valleys, inviting them to assist him in making a desperate stand against the people of Israel.

All with one accord consented, and their assembled armies were as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, with very many horses and chariots; and they pitched their camps together at the waters of Merom, a large lake through which the river Jordan runs, not far from its source, quite in the north of Canaan.

And the Lord said unto Joshua,

"Be not afraid because of them; for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel; thou shalt kill their horses, and burn their chariots with fire."

So Joshua and all his people of war came suddenly upon the vast army of idolaters by the waters of Merom.

And the Lord delivered their enemies into the hand of Israel, who smote them and put them to flight, and chased them a long way westwards, even to Zidon on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea; and they smote them until they left none remaining.

And Joshua destroyed their horses and chariots as the Lord commanded him.

Then Joshua turned back, and took Hazor. Jabin the king was slain, and all the inhabitants destroyed, and the city burnt to ashes.

And Joshua took all the cities belonging to the allied kings, and utterly destroyed all the inhabitants, as the Lord had commanded. As the Lord commanded Moses His servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua. He left undone nothing of all that the Lord commanded Moses.

It was not, however, till five years after the Israelites crossed the river Jordan, that all these

conquests were completed. Not one city made peace with Israel, except the Hivites who lived in Gibeon; for the Lord had hardened the hearts of all those kings that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might destroy them utterly, and that they might find no favour.

The last enemies that Joshua destroyed were the Anakims, a race of giants dwelling in the mountains. Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities; none were left alive in all Canaan, except in the towns of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod, in the country of the Philistines, on the west coast, which still remained unconquered.

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel. And the land rested from war.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ON THE THIRTEENTH TO THE TWENTY-SECOND
CHAPTERS OF JOSHUA.

Now Joshua was old and well-stricken in years. And the Lord commanded Joshua to divide the land by lot amongst the tribes of Israel, which was conquered, and that which still

mained unconquered, namely, the coasts still occupied by the Philistines towards the south; and towards the north, the coasts belonging to the Sidonians, as also the mountains of Hermon on the north-east.

So Joshua and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of Israel, began to divide the land by lot amongst the tribes of Israel. Only the tribe of Levi had no inheritance of land given unto them. The sacrifices to the Lord God, made by fire, was their inheritance.

The children of Joseph, namely, Manasseh and Ephraim, were reckoned as two tribes, so that there were twelve tribes, without counting the priestly tribe of Levites.

Now Caleb the son of Jephunneh came to Joshua in Gilgal, and said unto him, "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses, the man of God, concerning me, in Kadesh-barnea. Forty years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart.

"Nevertheless, my brethren that went with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses *sware* on that day, saying, Surely the land

whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.

"And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive these forty and five years, ever since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day eighty-five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was when Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war.

"Now, therefore, give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day. For thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and walled. If so be the Lord be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said."

Then Joshua blessed Caleb, his old companion in that expedition which they, with the other thirty-eight spies, had made together into Canaan forty and five years before. And he gave him the mountain he asked for as his inheritance. The name of the place was Hebron. It is still very fertile, and is situated in the Canaan, in the hill country of Judea; as I hope you remember, Abraham here lived, and was buried.

And the whole congregation of Israel removed from Gilgal, and assembled together at Shiloh, and there set up the tabernacle of the congregation. Shiloh is situated in the country allotted to the tribe of Ephraim, close to the boundary of Benjamin; and here the ark of the testimony remained for about three hundred and fifty years.

There were still seven of the tribes which had not yet received their inheritance, it being in that part of Canaan which still remained unconquered and unexplored.

And Joshua sent three men from each of these seven tribes to go through the land, and bring back an exact description of it, that it might be divided by lot, like the rest.

So the men arose and went away, and passed through the land, and wrote a description of it in a book, and returned to Joshua and all the host at Shiloh.

And Joshua and Eleazar, and the princes of the children of Israel, divided the land by lot between the seven remaining tribes, Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan, before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle in Shiloh.

Thus an end was made of dividing the land.

The cities of refuge, the safety places for any man to flee to who should accidentally have caused the death of another, were next appointed, according to the commandment of the Lord; three on the west of Jordan—Kadesh, Shechem, and Hebron, and three on the east of Jordan—Bezer, Ramoth-Gilead, and Golan.

Then came near the heads of the Levites to Joshua, and claimed the cities and suburbs for themselves and their cattle, which had been commanded by the Lord to be given to them, out of the inheritance of the other tribes.

Forty-eight cities were accordingly given to the Levites by lot, with suburbs to each, for barns and gardens, corn-fields, vineyards, and pasture-grounds.

“And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that He sware unto their fathers: and **there stood not a man** of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass.” (ch. xxi. 43, 44, 45.)

CHAPTER LXV.

ON THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER OF JOSHUA.

THEN Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and said unto them,

“Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you ; ye have not left your brethren these many days, unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the Lord your God.

And now the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them ; therefore now, return ye, and get you to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side Jordan. But take diligent heed to do the commandment of the law which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

“Return unto your tents, with much riches, and with very much cattle, with silver, with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment ; divide the spoil of your enemies *with* your brethren.”

So Joshua blessed them.

And the children of Reuben and of Gad and of the half tribe of Manasseh departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, to go into the country of Gilead, the land of their possession. How glad their wives must have been to have seen them again, after their long absence of seven years. What a joyful, tender meeting must have taken place between them ; and how pleased the children must have been with all the beautiful things, the ornaments of gold and silver, the splendid dresses, and the droves of sheep and cattle, which their fathers had brought home from the wars.

Now after their return to their inheritance, word was brought to the other tribes of Israel, that they had built a very large altar on the other side of the Jordan, at the place where the Israelites had crossed it.

And all the Israelites were very angry when they heard it, for it was against the commandment of the Lord that any sacrifices should be offered except in the place He Himself should choose. (Deut. xii. 10, 11.) So the whole congregation gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against the Danites, the Reubenites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

Before setting off, however, they sent Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest, and ten chief princes of Israel, to inquire into the matter.

So these men came to their brethren on the other side Jordan and spake to them, saying: "Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, in that ye have builded an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the Lord ?

"It will be, seeing ye rebel to-day against the Lord, that to-morrow He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

"If the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over into the land where the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us, but rebel not against the Lord, nor against us, in building you another altar, besides the altar of the Lord our God. Did not Achan commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation ? and that man fell not alone in his iniquity."

Then answered the two tribes and the half tribe: "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, He knoweth, and Israel shall know, if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, that we have built us an altar, to turn

from following the Lord; or if to offer burnt-offerings thereon, or meat-offerings, or peace-offerings."

Then they went on eagerly to explain that they had intended the great altar, which they had built after the pattern of the altar of the Lord, as a witness, or testimony, that they belonged also to the house of Israel, though separated by the river from the rest of their brethren. They feared, they said, that in time to come the children of Israel on the west of Jordan might refuse to acknowledge that they in the east had any part in the Lord. "Then," said they, "our children shall say, 'Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord, which our fathers made; not for sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you.' God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord to build an altar for sacrifices, besides the altar of the Lord our God that is before His tabernacle."

And when Phinehas and the ten princes heard this answer, it pleased them, and they were quite satisfied. And Phinehas said, "This day we perceive that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord."

So the ambassadors returned over Jordan into

Canaan, and brought the Israelites word of the happy result of their journey. And the thing pleased the children of Israel ; and they blessed God, and gave up all intention of going against their brethren in battle, to destroy the land where they dwelt.

And the children of Reuben and Gad called the altar of testimony which they had built, "Ed," which signifies "Witness," "for it shall be," they said, "a witness between us that the Lord is God."

CHAPTER LXVI.

ON THE TWENTY-THIRD AND TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTERS OF JOSHUA.

Now about ten or twenty years after this, Joshua being a very old man, assembled all the congregation of Israel together, and made a long address to them.

He promised them that the Lord would drive out from before them all the remnant of their enemies, if they would be very courageous to keep all the law of Moses, and take good heed to have no sort of communication with the idolaters still dwelling in the land ; most especially to take heed not to bow down before, and serve their idols, but to cleave unto the Lord God.

For if the Israelites should in any way join themselves to those nations that remained, or make marriages with them, "Know for a certainty," said Joshua, "that the Lord your God will no more drive out those nations from before you ; but they shall be snares and traps unto you ; and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth ; and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you. Therefore, it shall come to pass that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord promised you, so, when ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them, the Lord your God will bring upon you all evil things, until He hath destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you."

Again Joshua called all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem, a place about the very centre of Canaan. And they presented themselves before the Lord. And here Joshua ad-

dressed them for the last time. He rehearsed to them all that the Lord had done for them and for their forefathers, saying :

“ Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood [river Euphrates] in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

“ And I gave unto Isaac, Jacob and Esau ; and I gave unto Esau, mount Seir to possess it. But Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

“ I sent Moses also, and Aaron ; and I plagued Egypt according to that which I did among them ; and afterwards I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and ye came unto the sea ; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea. And when they cried unto the Lord, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them. And your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt, and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

“ And I brought you into the land of the *Amorites*, which dwelt on the other side Jordan,

and they fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land. Then Balak, king of Moab, warred against Israel and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you ; but I would not hearken unto Balaam, therefore he blessed you still ; so I delivered you out of his hand.

“And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho ; and the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites fought against you, and I delivered them into your hand.

“And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them ; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not, do ye eat.

“Now, therefore, fear the Lord in sincerity and in truth ; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord.

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve ; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood (Gen. xxxi. 30 ; xxxv. 2), or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell : but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

And the people answered and said, “God

forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods ; for the Lord our God. He it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed ; and the Lord drove out from before us all the people which dwelt in the land. Therefore we will also serve the Lord, for He is our God."

And Joshua said unto the people ; " Ye cannot serve the Lord ; for He is an holy God ; He is a jealous God : He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, then He will turn, and do you hurt and consume you."

And the people said, " Nay ; but we will serve the Lord."

And Joshua said, " Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord to serve Him."

And they said, " We are witnesses. The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey."

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God. And he

took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak.

And Joshua said unto all the people, "Behold this stone shall be a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God."

So Joshua left off speaking to the people, and he let the people depart, every man to his inheritance.

And it came to pass after these things that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

And he was buried in the portion of his inheritance, at Timnath-serah, in mount Ephraim.

And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that survived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that He had done for Israel.

And the bones of Joseph which the Israelites had brought out of Egypt, they buried in Shechem, in the piece of land which Joseph left to his son Joseph, and which belonged before to the tribe of Ephraim and Manasse, Joseph's sons. Thus the promise which the brethren had made to Joseph was at length fulfilled.

And Eleazar, the high priest, died. And they buried him in the land of Ephraim, in the city of Eleazar, the son of Phineas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron.

belonged to Phinehas his son, which had been given him in Mount Ephraim.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THUS were the people of Israel, after their long sojourn in Egypt and their forty years' wandering in the desert, restored to the land of their forefathers; that land which the Lord God had promised to Abraham should be possessed by his descendants; a promise which He had since constantly renewed, and which he had now fulfilled.

Canaan at the time of its division amongst the tribes was probably one hundred and eighty miles long, and one hundred and thirty wide.

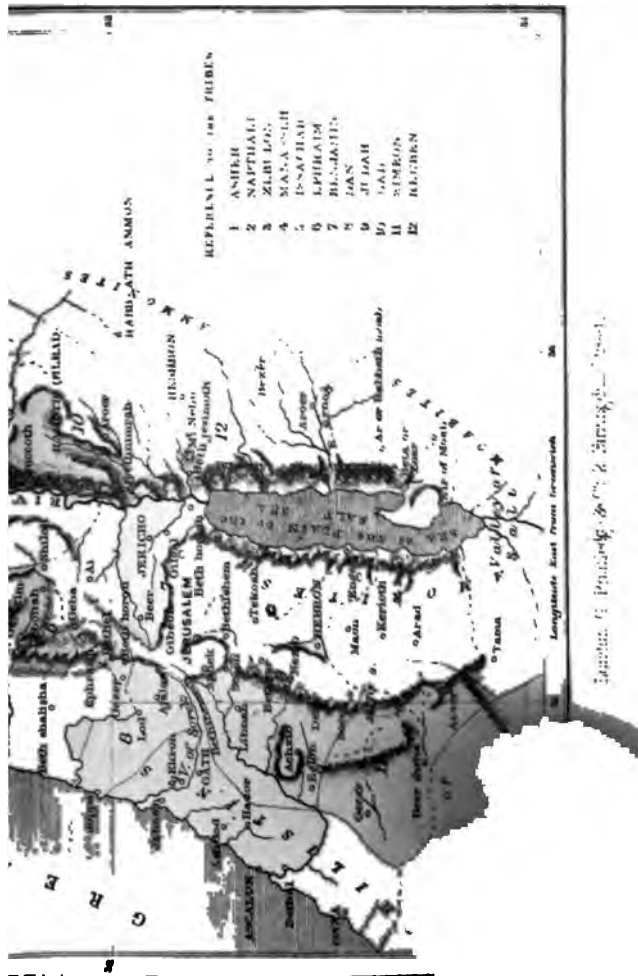
It was a beautiful country, "a glorious land," of mountains and valleys and plains, of lakes and streams, besides the fine river Jordan, of which you have read so much.

At the present day, Palestine, as Canaan is now called, is in most parts barren and uncultivated and gone to waste from neglect and want of inhabitants; yet the soil in numerous places still gives token of extraordinary fertility, from the abundance of fruits and the richness of the crops which it produces; but at the time

TO ILLUSTRATE THE
EARLY PORTIONS OF
SCRIPTURE HISTORY.

English: M.Lee.





Map of the Holy Land, showing the twelve tribes of Israel, and the surrounding countries.

100

•

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
84

when the Israelites came into possession, when it was full of prosperous and wealthy inhabitants, it was indeed "a land flowing with milk and honey."

The Israelites, who were naturally fond of cultivating the soil, of planting, of building, and rearing cattle, were not likely to let the land deteriorate, that is, grow worse, under their care, and no part of it was allowed to go to waste.

The plains formed rich corn lands. Bashan, on the east of Jordan, was famous for its pastures and fat cattle; the fertile plain of Jericho for its palm-trees. The mountains of Gilead were famous for their flocks, especially of goats, with very fine long hair, and also for their balm-trees. Balm was produced from the balm-tree. This is a gum which exudes, or comes out, from the branches, in the same way that you have may seen gum exude from cherry or plum-trees in the garden. The balm for which Gilead is famous is still so much prized in the East for its fragrance and other qualities, that it commands an enormous price, and the best is brought to Europe.*

The rocks of Canaan were
yards, and the hills with

* Milman

sorts of grain grew in abundance—such as wheat, barley, and millet; also many kinds of fruits, olives and grapes, figs, oranges, melons and pomegranates, dates, prickly pears, delicious apricots and mulberries, quinces, apples, pears, and walnuts. Sweet herbs and gay flowers were abundant, and from these the bees made delicious honey.*

Trees, such as the palm, the oak, the maple, the arbutus and sumach, the sycamore and acacia, and many other kinds, clothed the hills and valleys, and adorned the plains. All these grains, these fruits, these trees still grow luxuriantly† in parts of Palestine, and we may suppose that most, if not all of them, were enjoyed by the Israelites, its ancient possessors.

Hares, partridges, rabbits, and quails still abound about the country. In the mountains, the gazelle, the wild goat, the wild boar, and jackal are numerous; the pigeons build amongst the rocks; the nightingale warbles in the thickets, and the lark soars, singing above the corn-fields.‡

In the times of the Israelites there were bears and lions, but now lions are never seen in Syria,

* Milman and Robinson.

† Robinson.

‡ Ibid.

and bears are only found in the mountains of Lebanon.*

The climate of Palestine is in general very uniform. In autumn and winter there is rain in plenty, and snow even falls at Jerusalem in the months of January and February, but the ground never freezes. In the summer it is always fine weather, without any rain whatever, and everything is parched up, except an occasional field of millet, and the scattered fruit-trees and vineyards.

The autumn rains, called in Scripture "the early rains," begin by degrees at the latter end of October, or beginning of November, and continue to fall heavily to the end of December. Then they become less heavy till March, the season of "the latter rains," when they cease, with the exception of sometimes occasional showers in April and May, but rain does not in general fall so late.

The wheat harvest begins early in May, in the hottest parts of Palestine; the finest grapes ripen in July, but the general vintage does not take place till September; and some fruits, such as apricots, ripen as early as May.†

* Hemprich and Ehrenberg.

† Robinson.

In manufactures the Israelites were very skilful, as you have already learned. They could weave in wool, in linen, and probably in cotton, which plant is still grown in Palestine; they made fine stuffs of goat's hair. They could dye various colours, and embroider beautifully; they were very skilful in all goldsmith's work, in carving and sculpture, and were fond of music and singing.

In the beautiful land of their inheritance, the descendants of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob, this favoured people of the Lord, were thus you see, my dear children, provided with everything that could minister to their wants and comforts; plenty surrounded them on every side, and there need not have been any misery or poverty among the many thousands of Israel. And in this prosperity they might still have remained, had they not turned aside from the Lord their God, broken his commandments, united themselves with the idolaters that remained in the land, worshipped their graven images, and imitated all their wicked practices, as Moses had foretold. Then at length came to pass the chastisements with which the Lord had threatened them; He "heaped mischiefs upon them, and bitter destruction, and hid His face from them, and scattered

them among all people." And to this day the Jews, the descendants of Israel, have neither country, nor king, nor government of their own ; they literally are "scattered among all people." There is hardly a country where they are not to be met with ; nor one in which they are owned as a part of the nation amongst which they dwell.

THE END.

NOTES.
RACE AND REWARD, PRINTED,
CHAS. W. STARR.

